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Marxism Today

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DISCUSSION ON: BILL WARMAN — "WHITHER TRADE UNIONISM!"

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Mr. Pelling on the Communist Party*

Andrew Rothstein

Britain from 1918 to 1958

THE period in which the Communist Party of Great Britain came into existence, and in which it has carried on its fight ever since, has been one of historic transition in the life of the British people. The world war of 1914-18, victorious though its end was for British imperialist finance capital, nevertheless marked the beginning of a prolonged crisis for the latter—and a crisis of decline, not of growth.

United States imperialism entered the arena of world politics in 1917-18, to challenge the previous domination of the City of London. Over the huge area of Europe and Asia previously ruled by Tsardom and penetrated by British investments the proletariat, led by the Bolshevik Party—revolutionary Marxists—took power and proceeded in 1917-20 to beat off all attacks, though these attacks were led by British military might. Pre-war campaigns of nationalist intellectuals in colonies of the British Empire—Ireland, Egypt, India and elsewhere—became in 1918-20 huge mass upheavals of entire nations demanding their independence. And the British working class itself, with the end of the war, entered upon a series of great strikes and political campaigns of which "the Great Unrest" of 1911-14 had been but the forerunner, but which in some respects seemed to recall the more distant and heroic times of the Chartists.

British capitalism seemed unable to go on governing in the old way—the warship enforcing Britain's will on the high seas, the stick for the peoples of the colonies, the carrot of alternate Liberal and Tory promises at home. The British working class, like its natural allies the peoples of the colonies, seemed unwilling to go on living in the old way—and its organisations, the trade unions and the Labour Party, the shop stewards' committees in the factories and others, seemed to have been infused by all their wartime experiences with a desire for Socialism as the new way. And indeed both trade unions and Labour Party grew rapidly in numbers as compared with pre-1914 days, and never fell back to those levels even after periods of disaster (unions affiliated to the T.U.C.—2,232,000 members in 1913, 6,505,000 in 1920, 3,294,000 in 1934, well over 8 million twenty years later; Labour Party affiliated and individual membership—1,612,000 in 1914, 4,360,000 in 1920, 2,278,000 in 1934, 6½ million in 1954). Indeed, several times during the forty years since the end of the First World War—and certainly in 1919-20—the British workers seemed to be on the point of responding to the observation of August Bebel, the famous German Social-Democratic leader, at an International Socialist Congress in London (July 30th, 1896): "You, the English working class, have but to will it, and you will be masters of society."

The strides forward in power and influence, however, were being made by a working class even the decisive sections of which—despite Socialist propaganda—were not consciously aiming at being masters of society. The British working class, second to none in resolution and solidarity so far as *trade union* consciousness is concerned, i.e. in defending its own economic interests and those of its brothers and allies, was far behind the working class of many other countries in *class* consciousness, i.e. in realising its historical mission of making itself effective master of society, and in sustained political action on every field to bring this about. There is no mystery about the causes of this lag: they sprang from the privileged position of the British working class, relative to the workers (and still more the peasants) of almost every other country in the world—itself made possible by Britain being the first-comer in industrial capitalism and in the financial and economic exploitation of colonies and other industrially backward countries.

The fact that great pressures exerted by the working class in such conditions—by stubborn strikes, steadfastness in lockouts, militancy in demonstrations for legislative reforms—could extort concessions from the British capitalists which they refused to the colonies (using bayonets, bullets and jails to drive home their refusal) seemed to reinforce the arguments spread assiduously and ceaselessly among the people by their rulers. These were: that Britain was a shining exception among the nations, where tolerance and reasonableness prevailed in

* Henry Pelling. *The British Communist Party. A Historical Profile.* (A. and C. Black, 18s.)

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the long run just as much in the capitalist class as among the people; that therefore Socialism could be reached by a process of compromise with the capitalists, without the workers becoming masters of society in the literal sense; and that, if the workers would not listen any longer to their old friends of the Tory and Liberal parties, the right leaders for them were those who practised such compromise, and who, if given a parliamentary majority, would bring in Socialism more or less painlessly, as the Factory Acts, trade union rights, old age pensions and the vote had been brought in.

Thus the British working class had indeed, by 1920, gone forward from the attitude of the official trade union representatives, Steadman and Hennessy, to whom Bebel was replying in 1896, and who had objected to any independent political organisation of the workers. But the Labour Party and trade union leaderships whom they were now following, in the era of decline of British imperialism, conceived of their task as that of co-operating with the capitalist class, not establishing the workers' mastery of society—of competing with the Tories and Liberals as successful administrators of the parliamentary system (and therefore of the "assumptions" of capitalist rule which lay behind it), not of using the parliamentary system, and much else in British life, to end capitalism altogether.

"A Real Labour Party"

Harry Quelch, the editor of the British Social-Democrats' weekly *Justice*, had written in March 1910:

> "A real Labour Party should have for its objective the overthrow of the capitalist rule and the emancipation of the working class. It should understand that Parliamentarism is simply a means to that end, and that the means must always be subservient to the end. Once a Labour Party clearly understands that position, it will be not less, but more, zealous in its work for ameliorative measures; but it will also attach less importance to these proportionately, and will be consequently bolder in its attack upon the power and privilege of the possessing class." *

But this was not the aim of the Labour Party leaders,† either then or ten years later, in 1920—nor is it in 1958, for that matter.

Thus the working class of Britain, just over forty years ago, entered upon a long period of great struggles, economic and political, which bore within them a threat to the very existence of capitalist rule, without consciously, as a class, wishing to end that rule. It brought, first tentatively in 1924 and 1929, and then effectively in 1945, a Labour Party leadership into control of the levers of government which quite consciously was determined not to use those levers to end capitalism (and today, in its last policy statements, has given public notice that it wishes to strengthen capitalism). And British finance-capital, at first (in 1919 and 1920) terrified that the huge upsurge of workers' unrest in Britain and national revolt in the colonies spelled the end of its domination, gradually accustomed itself to the idea that—for the time being at any rate—it could, with the assistance of the Labour Party leadership and programme, resume the old Box-and-Cox method of rule, accepting and gradually substituting the Labour Party for the Liberals, as the parliamentary alternative to the Tories.

This in essence was the complex and contradictory situation which came into existence after the First World War and developed during the following forty years. In itself a period of transition—for only the blind can fail to see that the root causes which brought it into being have gone on operating and latterly have become more powerful—the period from 1918 to 1958 found the British ruling class sufficiently equipped by past history with powerful brakes to slow down the effects of decline: equipped indeed, as no other ruling class in the world. We can see throughout these forty years the interplay of decline and retardation, of class struggles forced upon the workers and delusions peddled more effectively among them, of their organisations being strengthened in struggle against capitalism, only to be laid hold of and utilised in the interests of capitalism.

In one form this applied during the periods of Tory domination—1918 to 1923, 1924 to 1929, 1931 to 1940, 1951 to 1958. At these times the main party of British finance-capital used its powers without compunction to act in the interests of its moneybags, restrained only by the Tory principle of "distrust of the people tempered by fear". At other times—the minority Labour Governments of 1924 and 1929-31, still more the majority Labour Governments of 1945-50 and 1950-51—the Labour leaders used their authority to make such reforms in the workers' interests as the working class movement held them to. This applied particularly to the period immediately after the Second World War, in the winning of which, next to the tremendous strength of the Soviet Union, the effort of British organised labour played no inconsiderable part, however thwarted by the policies of the Government. Nevertheless their policy became, more and more openly, to treat the capitalist "as a man and a brother" (Herbert Morrison's watchword in the 1929 administration) and this became particularly explicit during the majority Labour Government of 1945-50. Similarly they upheld the "Jolly old

* *Harry Quelch: Literary Remains*. Edited by E. Belfort Bax (London, 1914), page 178.

† Only recently it has been revealed that the Labour Party leader, J. Ramsay MacDonald, entered in 1903 into an ultra-secret pact with the Liberals to avoid this.

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Empire", i.e. the colonial interests of British finance capital, by police bludgeons and soldiers' bullets so long as they could, in India, Egypt, Burma, Palestine, Africa and elsewhere—only retreating to make a compromise with the native bourgeoisie, on the basis of political power in exchange for protection of British dividends, when international circumstances forced their hands, as with India in 1947 (just as the Tories had retreated in Ireland, twenty-five years before). The conflict between their fear of Socialism and the deep-seated instinct of international solidarity among the workers took varied forms: refusal and repression, before the Second World War, of united working class action to support the Spanish Republic (1936-8) or prevent the betrayal of Czechoslovakia (1938), and open hostility after the war to the Soviet Union and the Socialist Republics of eastern Europe, alliance against them with the U.S.A. dollar-kings in place of the "common bond with the working peoples of all countries" which they had promised in their 1945 election manifesto (*Let us Face the Future*). A recent royal biography* has shown Mr. Attlee yielding to the "advice" of George VI and appointing Bevin Foreign Secretary, rather than Dalton—widely spoken of at the time as "too friendly to the Russians".

You would search Mr. Pelling's book in vain for any indication that this was the situation in which the Communist Party worked since 1920—or indeed that there was any particular evolution in the condition of the British working class to which the Communist Party had to appeal, of the Empire in which it had to work or of the reformist leaders who used their great opportunities to combat the Communists.

Communist Policies and Practice

What had a Communist Party to do, in the circumstances in which it found itself from 1920 onwards?

Obviously at every turn of the political situation to put forward to the working class in the first instance, and to the best of its ability and resources, the views of revolutionary Marxists on what ought to be done, in the manner most calculated to win support for what often was a surprising and sometimes unpopular policy. This was not something new on the political landscape: the parties and groups which came together, between August 1920 and April 1921, to form the Communist Party had often done it during the war, and long before it for that matter. The essential thing, however, was to keep constantly before the workers the goal to which the various policies should lead—ending the capitalist system—and not to hide this ultimate aim in order to make immediate propositions more palatable. Did the Communists require to learn this from Moscow? No, Marx and Engels had taught it them:

> "The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement. . . . The Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things. In all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time" (*Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 1848).

What the Bolsheviks had done was to show the whole world of labour, British included, that the theory of struggle embodied in these words—anti-opportunist and anti-sectarian at the same time—could, under the leadership of revolutionary Marxists, bring the working class of a vast country to the position of masters of society.

Since Mr. Pelling, in his alleged "historical profile", has almost completely overlooked the necessity of tracing how the policies put forward by the Communist Party were suited to a situation which he also forgot to include, we may supply the deficiency, at any rate in outline and for some of the outstanding cases.

Within a fortnight of the Party's having been formed, its lead to mass meetings all over the country—given in "five points" circulated by telegram and through a manifesto in a special Sunday edition of the *Daily Herald*—raised a widespread demand for strike action to stop the threatened renewal of war on Soviet Russia, and for committees of action to enforce the demand, before the official leadership of Labour had made up its mind.

In 1921-22, during the great capitalist offensive, the Communist Party—despite crippling government prosecution of its leaders—campaigned strongly against breakaways from the unions, and for solidarity of the many hundreds of thousands of unemployed with the employed. It followed this up by helping to organise the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement, which not only fought successfully for outside relief in many localities but succeeded, in contact with the T.U.C., in preventing cuts in relief scales aimed at making the position of the unemployed desperate.

From 1923 onwards, under the watchwords of unity in the factories, the trades councils and through the General Council, the finest workers in the Communist Party helped to organise the Minority Movement in many unions and spread a new spirit of militancy in the working class; with

* J. Wheeler-Bennett, *King George VI* (1958).

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the result that many partial victories were won, the Labour vote greatly increased and this led to the formation of the Labour Government (at this time many Communist trade unionists were delegates to local Labour Parties); and the 1924 T.U.C. was induced to enter the field of international solidarity more actively by establishing contacts with the Soviet trade unions and deciding to investigate labour conditions in India.

After "Red Friday" in 1925, when the threat to stop all transport of coal prevented a cut in miners' wages, the Communist Party, campaigning directly and in the Minority Movement, succeeded in getting together two great national assemblies to prepare for the next stage of the struggle—the second annual conference of the Minority Movement, representing 750,000 workers (August 1925) and the "Conference of Action", representing 957,000 workers (March 1926). These made widely known methods of organisation which, in a number of important areas, were applied* during the General Strike of 1926. During that great struggle itself, and during the seven months' fight of the miners which followed, the Communist Party—already attacked in October 1925 by the imprisonment of twelve of its national leaders—drew down on itself the most vicious persecution of the authorities because of its militant and effective policies widely taken up among the miners.

For many years the Communist Party put principles into practice by asking some of its best and most experienced trade unionists to go to India, where they helped in the organisation of trade unions led by workers instead of barristers for the first time, and showed in practice the difference between Communists and reformists where the struggle for social and national liberation from British rule was concerned. The Tory Government, by launching raids and prosecutions in India in March 1929, and the Labour Government by continuing the Meerut trial (which lasted on until 1933), proved to vast numbers of colonial people, particularly in India, that the Communist Party was their champion.

Throughout the most difficult years of economic crisis—1931 to 1934—the Communist Party led scores of strikes and demonstrations of the workers against the wage-cuts and relief cuts dictated by the National Government, securing (after great mass struggles of the unemployed against the police) the restoration of many of the cuts in relief effected in 1931. The accounts of these and earlier years by William Gallacher, Harry Pollitt and Wal Hannington* provide vivid and authentic evidence of how deeply the Communist Party lived the life of the British people—and how fiercely, but in vain, the capitalist class sought to root it out.

* It is instructive to compare the Report of the Special National Conference of Action on March 21, 1926 (National Minority Movement, 1926) with Emile Burns' *The General Strike, May 1926: Trades Councils in Action* (Labour Research Department, 1926.)

The Anti-Fascist Struggle

From the beginning of the Hitler terror in Germany (1933) and of the gradual spread of its influence throughout Europe, under the benevolent patronage of American Big Business investors and of the British Tory Government and its hangers-on, the Communist Party went into action against it. Well-known Communists joined with equally well-known non-Communists (even Tory anti-Communists) to develop a big anti-Fascist movement in Britain, to which the only real obstacle in practice proved the bans and prohibitions imposed by the Labour Party Executive. On September 4th, 1934, despite denunciations by the Government, the Churches, the B.B.C., the Labour leaders and the General Council, 100,000 people came to Hyde Park at the call of the Communist Party to turn a provocative march (under police guard) by the British Fascist Oswald Mosley into a crushing demonstration against him; and hundreds of thousands successfully packed the streets in the East End of London on October 4th, 1936—again on the appeal of the Communist Party, and backed by barricades in Cable Street—to bar the way to another still more provocative march Mosley had announced.

That year, the Communists led the way in opposing the treacherous aid given by the British Government, under the guise of "non-intervention," to Hitler and Mussolini in their invasion of Republican Spain—aid which was supported by the Labour Party leaders for the first critical twelve months of the war. Even when forced to abandon it, by rank and file pressure, they continued to refuse common action with the Communists to secure the sending of arms to the Republic. The Communist Party led the way in organising and maintaining (1936-38) the famous British Battalion of the International Brigade—in which hundreds of non-Communists fought shoulder to shoulder with Communist Party members.

So also the Communists led the way in demanding support for Czechoslovakia against Chamberlain and Hitler in 1938—a demand to which tens of thousands responded, though the Labour leaders refused all practical action against the Government's policy—and in denouncing Munich, in particular, through the historic speech of William Gallacher in the House of Commons (September 29th, 1938).

The main campaigns, mentioned here, were

* *The Rolling of the Thunder* (1948), *Selected Articles and Speeches*, Vol. I (1953) and *Unemployed Struggles, 1919-1936*, respectively.

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patterns for lesser ones—and for many others in the years which followed.

The Property Question

In all these struggles, making up the fundamental texture of Communist Party policy and practice, there have been certain constant features. First, they concerned the vital interests of the British people, and in the first instance of the working class. Second, the Communists throughout brought up "the property question" and the "future of the movement", i.e. they never failed to show British capitalism as the enemy. Third, in all this great variety of struggles—much wider than any Socialist organisation in Britain had ever ventured to undertake before them—the Communists always secured the support and opened the eyes of hundreds of thousands of non-Communist workers, for many of whom it was the first entry into political life. Fourth, in every case the Communists were in advance of general opinion when they began, and were only justified by later developments—often after a period, as in 1939-40, when they were unpopular and reviled for their pains.

What has Mr. Pelling to say of all this? Very little: the British working class and its battles against capitalism, which are the real justification for the Communist Party, hardly exist for him.

The war threat of 1920 and the Councils of Action? They never happened. The capitalist offensive of 1921-22 and the successful fight against union breakaways and for employed-unemployed solidarity? They didn't exist. The role of the Minority Movement in the years 1923-25? You wouldn't notice it, beyond (by inference) a grudging tribute for the "militant temper" of delegates at the 1925 T.U.C. The great work of the Communists in preparing for the General Strike? Mr. Pelling hasn't heard of it. Their self-sacrificing work during those "Nine Days"? It was "because the Communists enjoyed the martyrdom of arrest and imprisonment for the cause," spits out this pigmy. The new page in Indian trade unionism and revolutionary politics opened by the help of British Communists? Mr. Pelling is not interested: his short account (pages 41-2) reads like a police-sergeant's notebook. The successes won by employed and unemployed during the defensive struggles of the crisis years (1931-34)? He hasn't heard of them either: he is only interested in the defeats, of which of course there were plenty. The successful demonstrations against Mosley in 1934 and 1936? Unrecognisable under the slimy reference to "loyal members of the C.P.G.B. who were prepared to match disorder with disorder" (page 83). The British Battalion in Spain—apart from sneering remarks about its record not being "all idealism and noble sacrifice" (page 94)? Why, the dead and wounded among its members were "excellent propaganda for the Party . . . the more casualties, the more honour to the Party" (pages 94-5). Czechoslovakia? Not a mention.

Mr. Pelling's Funny Stories

But if neither the struggles nor the times of the Communist Party find any reflection in Mr. Pelling's mirror, how does he justify the claim that his book is "a historical profile" of the Party? If the elementary canons of the historian have been laid aside, what does this Fellow of the Queen's College, Oxford, put in their place? Funny stories, anecdotes about the Party's mistakes, gossip about who said what in private talks—most of them from tainted sources, and larded with original misinformation to an astonishing extent.

First, however, a general observation. Any revolutionary working class party pursuing the purposes set out earlier, in the complex conditions described when, as Mr. Pelling puts it, "the British people have never been in revolutionary mood" (p. 182), would be bound to make many mistakes, and thus to give openings to its enemies. The Communist Party, formed in 1920, from a number of small Socialist organisations whose paths had been distinct, varied and each marked by its own opportunist or sectarian errors, was bound to make extra mistakes, so to speak, in learning over the years how to fuse the positive contributions of its component groups while slowly eliminating the errors.* The record of the Communist Party, therefore, has its share of mistakes, stupidities, exaggerated assessments: and, to the extent that these also occurred in the work of the Communist International of which it was a member, they were shared by the Communist Party in this country too. But in the first place they occurred in the life and work of a Party which was throughout fighting for the working class against the capitalist class; and, secondly, for that very reason they never prevented the Communist Party from achieving very considerable successes, often by learning from its own mistakes—successes so notable, indeed, that Mr. Pelling, as we have seen, prefers not to notice them (even though such a method nullifies any pretensions on his part to be a historian, or anything more than a somewhat unoriginal pamphleteer).

A true history of the Communist Party, even from the pen of an opponent, would be qualified to put the errors and stupidities in their real perspective against the historic work done so far by the Party; and one written by a Communist un-

* In this connection one cannot commend too often to the reader Morton and Tate, *The British Labour Movement*, 1770-1920 (1956)—a true pre-history of the Communist Party, indispensable to every Marxist.

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doubtedly will do so. Mr. Pelling's "profile", however, resembles such a history roughly to the degree that a tomcat doing his devotions on the roofs at night resembles Caruso.

Consider, first, some of Mr. Pelling's "facts". You learn that the British Government made only "attempts to intervene in Russia" (p. 5). Joe Fineberg, a national leader of the B.S.P. and one of the best-loved workers' spokesmen in the East End, becomes "one J. Fineberg" (*ibid.*) as though he was unknown before going to Russia. Sylvia Pankhurst on July 16th, 1919, "took the initiative" on the question of forming a Communist Party by writing to Lenin: in reality, the initiative had been taken much earlier, in 1919, on behalf of the Communist International, by Theodore Rothstein, and Miss Pankhurst's letter was an attempt to create barriers to unity (p. 6). The *International*—the Socialist hymn sung in all countries for a generation before 1921—becomes, on the occasion of the Party's Leeds Congress that year, "the Bolshevik anthem" (p. 14). The early membership of the Party "consisted, to a remarkable degree, of persons of non-English origin" (p. 15). At first, this is "decoded" as meaning immigrants and exiles from the Continent who, says Mr. Pelling, had formed "a high proportion" of the B.S.P.—the largest component of the C.P. But he quotes no chapter and verse for this, beyond mentioning two of its writers of Russian origin; nor could he have done, seeing (for example) that at the last B.S.P. Conference in April 1920 there were but 7 foreign-born delegates out of 79 present, and out of 104 speeches no more than 6 were by such delegates. Later, Mr. Pelling covers up his tracks: it turns out he included Irishmen, Scotsmen and Welshmen among the "non-English" (pp. 16-17)! Democratic centralism had never "previously existed on the extreme Left in British politics, with its strong nonconformist traditions" (p. 18): in reality, it existed very prominently in the S.L.P. and B.S.P.—with their strong atheist traditions!

The Labour Government of 1924 made "a trade agreement with the Soviet Union", but was overthrown because of the Campbell case (p. 29): in reality, it was full political and financial treaties which were signed, and the Government's overthrow was predetermined by the Liberals, with Tory backing, tabling a motion for rejection. Because Lenin, speaking of the Soviet trade unions in 1922, called them "the transmission belts from the Communist Party to the masses"—which had fought under direct, not "transmitted", Communist Party leadership pretty successfully from 1917 to 1921, by the way—Mr. Pelling suggests that this implied "an attitude of docility and political apathy among the non-Communist masses" (pp. 38-9). Leaving aside the question of whether the masses to whom *British* Communists appealed were "docile" and "apathetic", Mr. Pelling could have found plenty of illustrations in the very document he quotes to show that, on the contrary, Lenin wanted the trade unions to enlist the active participation of the masses in building up Socialism. By 1927 the Communist Party was "closely interlocked with the agencies of the Soviet Government in London" (p. 43): in reality, out of 700 British employees of Soviet institutions, not more than a few dozen were Communists, only three or four of them holding responsible posts and in no way "interlocked" with the Party, rather the reverse. "Arcos was disbanded in 1927" (p. 44): nothing of the kind, it went on doing business for years. British amendments to the draft colonial resolution at the Sixth Comintern Congress in 1928 were "heavily defeated" and the delegates left "in high dudgeon" (pp. 48-9): on the contrary, most of their amendments were accepted in committee, they voted for the final text, and they left in high spirits. In 1932 "there was no thought even in Germany that a common front against the real Fascist threat was either necessary or desirable" (p. 71): no doubt that was why the German Communists offered the Social-Democratic Party just such a front *three times* between June 1932 and January 1933.

Instead of the insurrection against the Republican Government at Barcelona in May 1937 being a Trotskyist (P.O.U.M.) affair—as even its champions then did not conceal—it turns out (p. 95) to have been a "Communist *coup*"! Mr. Pelling, in quoting Manuilsky's remarks in March 1939 on the difficulties encountered by the British Communists (p. 104), ingenuously contrives to overlook that he dwelt much longer on its growth of membership and influence, and on the response to its campaign for a Popular Front (*Land of Socialism Today and Tomorrow*, 1939, p. 86). On the same page, he purports to quote an E.C. report in 1939 on recruiting to the effect that "the gains seemed to be largely confined to the intellectuals": there is not one word in the report to justify this conclusion—unless Hants and Dorset, East Anglia and North Wales at that time were populated "largely" by intellectuals.

These are but a selection from a bewildering variety.

The Communist International

Mr. Pelling's other great standby, in his "profile"—which reminds one singularly of that wartime newspaper humorist who used to retail startling events observed "through an upturned glass in the blackout"—is an old and familiar one. The Communist Party was a member of the Communist International and its representatives sat in Moscow, where the International had its headquarters: "Moscow" sometimes sent letters to "London",

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and occasionally had live representatives there: for the first few years of its life, the Communist Party received some financial aid from the Communist International—hence it was under "a virtual financial stranglehold" of the Russian Communists (p. 44), "reduced to an almost slavish submission to Moscow" (p. 54), under "effective Russian control" (p. 75), "in the service of a dictatorship in another country" (p. 191) and so on.

More than thirty years ago, in August 1926, the Party published a booklet under the title: "Orders from Moscow?" which real historians, no less than Mr. Pelling, would do well to study. In this were republished some speeches on the British situation made in March 1926 at the sixth enlarged meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International by well-known Communists—among them E. H. Brown and George Hardy—which critically examined, not only political, economic and trade union problems of their country, but also observations which had been made by others present, including Russians. As the preface pointed out, a Commission was then set up to draft a resolution "embodying the chief lessons which could usefully be learnt by the other Communist Parties. The chairman was a German, Comrade Braun, and the secretary an American: the members included all the British delegates, an Indian, a Russian, a Hungarian and several others". The work of the E.C.C.I. on this question was a miniature of the way the Communist International worked. John Gollan gave many other practical illustrations of this, last year, in *World News Discussion Supplement* (March 23rd, 1957).

Communists, including the British, did gather and maintain a permanent staff, in Moscow—for want of a more central meeting place which they were frequently denied. In their discussions of national and other problems, everyone had their say. Of course the Russians' opinions were listened to with respect: had they not done what Socialist writers, orators, agitators, organisers had been preaching for seventy years—established the rule of the working class and begun the Socialist transformation of society? But, just because of their greater experience, they were the foremost in *not* thrusting their opinions upon others—nor were old hands in every variety of labour movement, accustomed to fierce political discussions between friends as well as enemies, ready to take opinions from others ready made. Mutual criticism and mutual aid was the practice of the Communist International, and an immense amount of valuable experience was exchanged between countries in this way. And it is very revealing that, when an important letter was sent to the British Party Congress in November 1929, signed by three outstanding Communists from other countries whom only an ignoramus or an imbecile could *believe* to be tools of the Russians—Thaelmann (Germany), Semard (France) and Garlandi (Italy)—Mr. Pelling can only comment, after all his cat-calling, that this was done "lest it appear too openly that the Russian party was dictating to the Comintern" (p. 51): on the well-known principle of "heads I win, tails you lose".

The Communist Party Will Go On

If there were the space, one could spend an entertaining moment or two reviewing Mr. Pelling's exercises in thought-reading (Stalin had "always regarded the Comintern with suspicion" and so forth): and also his surprise that, at times of exceptional difficulties and victimisation, membership of the Communist Party fell. Mr. Pelling says that membership fell in the early part of the war, on the basis of London figures: he hasn't noticed, however, that in these months thousands of Communists were called up and others evacuated from London. But it is time to draw to a conclusion.

In 1956 the imperialist powers undertook a grand assault on the Socialist world and the liberated colonial peoples represented by Egypt, and were beaten off. It was only natural that they should take advantage of the public correction of serious errors in the U.S.S.R. to try it on with the Communist Parties as well. A somewhat belated episode in the try-on is this pamphlet—disguised as a historical study—by Mr. Pelling. It will do his reputation more harm than either he or anyone else expected it to do to the Communist Party. As for the latter's prospects, over which Mr. Pelling sombrely shakes his head ("the consolidation of the Welfare State, which we may perhaps presuppose, and the persistent though gradual elimination of old social barriers that will result, must continue to weaken the Communist appeal"), he and his friends can comfort themselves with his pamphleteering as others have done before them. The Communist Party will go on. The working class will continue to find in its daily fight a reliable champion, and in its policy all militants and Socialists will have a reliable guide. Neither slander nor prophecies of woe will frighten it, just as repressions cannot break it up. It has seen them before, as have other Communist Parties Mr. Pelling could think of. To borrow again the words of Marx in 1871: "The soil out of which it grows is modern society itself. . . . To stamp it out, the governments would have to stamp out the despotism of capital over labour—the condition of their own parasitical existence." And even then it will go on! Think on that, Mr. Pelling.

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Northern Ireland

John Hostettler

TORY, Liberal and Labour leaders never tire of telling us how fortunate we are to live in a country which houses the Mother of Parliaments. With pride they can point to Magna Carta, habeas corpus and trial by jury which we are told must be revered as "the only guarantees of liberty" and "the very cornerstone of the constitution".

A high moral tone is adopted to the rest of the world who are told that the English legal system is the finest system of law that can be devised and who are urged to adopt the "rule of law", by which is meant, in the famous words of A. V. Dicey, that "a man may be punished for a breach of the law but for nothing else".

Mr. Winston Churchill, when Prime Minister in 1943, wrote:

> "Nothing can be more abhorrent to democracy than to imprison a person or keep him in prison because he is unpopular. This is really the test of civilisation."

Labour leaders in their enthusiasm spare no pains to make it clear that although we suffer the insecurity of threatening slump and war, that is part of the price of living in what they choose to call a free society. We are witnessing in these statements, of course, more than merely the expression of false ideas. These people know what they are about and the spreading of all these ideas is a deliberate part of fostering the illusion that the state, including the police, courts and judges, is neutral and above classes, playing an impartial role in the class struggle. In other words, the benevolent state trying to reconcile classes instead of the reality of the state as an instrument of the bourgeoisie in its exploitation and oppression of the working class.

What is never mentioned is that these ancient and valuable safeguards of personal liberty as well as all democratic rights under capitalism were won by the people's struggles and their continued existence depends solely on the strength of the Labour movement and the people to defend and enforce them. The suspension of habeas corpus as well as the denial of trial by jury and the rule of law have all been experienced in Britain and could be again at any time within the law as it stands.

In addition the fundamental freedoms of speech, press, assembly, meetings, etc., are all severely limited by law as every progressive organisation knows only too well. Many examples of this and the restricted nature of democracy in Britain are fully illustrated in the new book *The British State* by James Harvey and Katherine Hood.

Then there is the diminishing Empire. Throughout the colonies at the present time all these so-called safeguards are thrown out in the name of the magic word "emergency" and replaced with ruthless repression by dictatorial powers all within the framework of the English legal system and the rule of law which, like the imperialist oppressors who use them, are seen to be very adaptable.

Conspiracy of Silence

It is not surprising that all of this is hidden from view whenever possible by a voluntary press censorship and we are left with the barrage of fine words and phrases. Similarly by this cowardly conspiracy of silence between Fleet Street and Whitehall the police terror in the Six Counties of Northern Ireland that reveals in glaring detail how, behind the fine words and in the name of the law, British imperialism destroys liberty and the rule of law and exercises its repression, is also kept hidden from the British public.

In Northern Ireland—a "province" where the British Government has supreme power and where the English legal system operates—the reactionary Ulster Unionist Government (agents of the British Tories) have established a police state in which none of these "guarantees of liberty" have existed for the past thirty-six years.

In the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948 Britain (in the name also of Northern Ireland which has no separate representation) voted for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which it claimed had great moral force. It is an interesting commentary on the morality of British imperialism that of the thirty articles of the Declaration the twenty most important are violated in Northern Ireland, including Article 5 which proclaims that "no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" and Article 9 which states "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile"—Churchill's "test of civilisation".

Likewise scant heed is paid to the preamble of the Declaration, part of which reads: "whereas

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it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse as a last resort to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law".

Suppression of Basic Rights

These twenty basic rights are suppressed in Northern Ireland—in accordance with the law of course—by means of the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Acts (Northern Ireland) 1922-43. By far the most important of this fantastic code of suppression of civil liberty is the principal Act of 1922: hence people in Northern Ireland generally speak of the "Special Powers Act", as will be done here.

This remarkable piece of legislation permits the Home Affairs Minister to make what Regulations he likes creating new crimes formerly unknown to law, and imposing any restrictions on liberty and democratic rights he thinks fit. As a result successive Ministers have built up a code of Regulations dealing with a startlingly wide range of matters affecting the everyday lives of citizens and giving themselves and the police all the powers of a dictatorship.

At present these powers are used with ferocity against *suspected* Republicans and their operation can be extended at a moment's notice to other sections and the Labour movement.

By virtue of the Special Powers Act and Regulations the Minister and the police are empowered to enter and search homes without warrant but with force at any hour of the day or night. Furthermore they may imprison a person without charge or trial and without recourse to habeas corpus or a court of law.

By these legislative breaches of civil liberty, the rule of law, habeas corpus and the right of defence in court—so-called safeguards against a police state—are simply abolished. And what of the sanctity of those other centuries-old cornerstones of the constitution: *Magna Carta* which in 1215 established the principle that no man should be imprisoned without due process of law, the *Petition of Right* which re-affirmed the same principle in 1628 and the *Statute of Northampton* which in 1328 provided that neither the Crown nor its Ministers may interfere with the ordinary course of justice (cf. case of Devlin below)? All are destroyed by a stroke of the Minister's pen with the British Government turning a blind eye.

Lest anyone should imagine these extensive powers are little used it should be recorded that at the present time nearly 200 prisoners are languishing in Belfast's notorious Crumlin Road jail without charge or trial and they are imprisoned indefinitely. It is in fact beyond doubt that no charge at all could possibly be preferred against them for it is possible to charge a man with many activities made "crimes" only by the Special Powers Act and indeed under S.2 (4) of the Act of 1922, which antedated by twelve years a similar enactment of Nazi law in Germany, a person may be charged for doing *"any act of such a nature as to be calculated to be prejudicial to the preservation of peace or maintenance of order in Northern Ireland and not specifically provided for in the Regulations"*. Hence it is possible to commit an offence under the Act without infringing any of the Regulations which say what must not be done and be liable to fourteen years imprisonment for it.

The fact that no charge, however thin, can be brought against internees is borne out by a recent case in the Belfast City Commission (i.e. Assizes) where an 18-year-old youth, Danny Devlin, was brought before the court only to find the prosecution unable to offer any evidence against him. The prosecution entered a *nolle prosequi* and the judge immediately discharged the youth. Yet as he left the precincts of the court he was arrested again and interned.

Because such internment is pursuant to the Special Powers Act no one can legally challenge so flagrant an injustice which is clearly a contempt of the courts and a mockery of justice.

How Arrests are Made

The manner of arrest under the Act is also worthy of note. In Northern Ireland there are many parents in great distress at the internment of their sons and the manner of their arrest. They describe how many of these men were arrested by heavily armed policemen breaking into their houses, like a Gestapo, in the dead of night and dragging their victims to the local police barracks for interrogation and internment. One mother has described how her son was in England from March, 1956, until October, 1957, when he returned to his home owing to illness. He was taken from his sickbed in the early hours of the morning in the middle of November and thrown from one police barracks to another for three days, then placed under detention for ten days, after which he was interned without charge or trial in the Belfast prison where he remains to this day.

It has been suggested that there is some safeguard in the fact that powers under the Special Powers Act can only be used when they are "necessary for preserving the peace and maintaining order" as S.1. (1) of the 1922 Act provides. That may have been the intention of the legislature when originally passing the Act, as it was their intention that the Act should continue in force

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for one year only. As often happens however the courts stepped in and determined the intention of the M.P.s according to their own lights and in a precedent binding for the future.

In the case of R. (O'Hanlon) v. Governor of Belfast Prison in 1922 an application for habeas corpus was made by an internee on the grounds that the Minister had not shown and was unable to show that his detention was "necessary for preserving the peace and maintaining order" as the Act required. The court rejected the application on the ground that it could not enquire into the allegation.

Legal authorities consider that by this decision the court altered the Act to provide that men could be interned when the Minister *thought* internment was necessary to preserve peace and order. How the court could decide that, when the Act clearly provides to the contrary, it is difficult to see and the legal textbooks say the case was wrongly decided. Nevertheless it remains a binding precedent unless altered by Parliament which has shown no inclination to restore its original intention in the last thirty-six years.

Visits to Prisoners Refused

The Special Powers Act and Regulations also give the Minister of Home Affairs power to prevent a person in prison from seeing or communicating with his relatives or lawyers. This often means in practice that a prisoner who is to be brought to trial cannot properly prepare his defence and it is also used to hold incommunicado prisoners and internees who have been beaten or tortured when it is desired that no one shall see their condition.

In the recent trial (which I attended as a legal observer) of Kevin Mallon and Francis Patrick Talbot, who were acquitted of the charge of murdering a Sergeant in the Royal Ulster Constabulary, relatives of the accused gave evidence that they were prevented from seeing them in prison for some weeks after arrest and for some time were not even told they were in prison at all. This followed detailed evidence of torture at the hands of the police by both the accused.

Similarly over forty internees in Belfast prison alleged in March this year that they were brutally assaulted in their cells by 150 members of the Special Reserve Force of the R.U.C. For many weeks after, the parents and lawyers of these men were unable to see or communicate with them. They were also refused permission to see the visiting justices or have the independent medical examination their lawyers requested. My own request while in Belfast to see three of them who had asked me to do so was refused by the Minister of Home Affairs until a date when it was known I would be back in London.

It is generally believed in Northern Ireland that Mallon and Talbot were tortured to extract the "confessions" that formed the only evidence against them in the murder trial, despite police denials. The fact that the jury found them "Not Guilty" added considerable weight to that belief.

In addition the police themselves admitted in evidence at the trial that relays of detectives—sometimes nine in number—had interrogated Mallon and Talbot for periods of many hours day and night. Since the trial a senior R.U.C. officer has confessed that there is an inherent conflict between the Judges' Rules which prohibit such conduct and their duties under the Special Powers.

Another provision of the Special Powers provides that the Minister may prohibit the holding of an inquest by the Coroner after a prisoner's death and thus the prisoner's relatives are denied all opportunity of inspecting the corpse for any marks of possible violence (that might even have caused death) in arrest or detention.

Other powers given to the Minister and the police include power to declare a curfew, prohibit meetings and permit punishment by flogging (specifically retained when abolished in England by the Criminal Justice Act 1948).

Trial by jury may be denied despite its being spoken of by Lord Justice Denning in these words:

> "The freedom of no one of us is to be taken away on a compromise; he must be found guilty or not guilty, and that by a verdict of each and all of a jury of his fellow men and by no one else."

Again certain old features of English law have been deliberately retained* and as a result juries may be "packed"; for in a criminal trial the jury is drawn from a list prepared by the Sheriff and in court the prosecution may object to any numbers of jurors called instead of only twelve as of right and without "showing cause", which is a rare possibility. Consequently the prosecution is able to ensure, for example, that a jury consists of no women, no person below a certain age or no person of a particular type of occupation or religion.

Another anachronism is seen in the continued existence of the Grand Jury selected from "residents of specially high intellect"! This today has the duty of deciding prior to the commencement of the Assizes whether the various accused per-

* Trade unionists will be interested to know that the Trades Disputes Act of 1927 has been retained in Northern Ireland and that the Stormont Government refuses to recognise the Irish T.U.C.

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sons have a case to answer, and the jurors listen to a Judge's speech which often contains comment on the circumstances surrounding some of the cases. Not surprisingly the proceedings of the Grand Jury have the definite effect through the press of prejudicing people's minds in certain cases. The mere fact that it is a "jury" that decides that a case should proceed to trial has an unfortunate effect.

New "Crimes"

The Minister and police may also take possession of any land or buildings and do any other act involving interference with private rights of property. Similarly they may prohibit the publication and possession of any newspaper, periodical or book and it is an offence for a person to have such a publication found on his premises *or premises in which he has resided.* If it is so found the publication is presumed to have been in his possession unless he can prove the contrary. Thus is the "much revered" presumption of innocence reversed and the last vestige of what little freedom of the press there is in capitalist society buried.

They may also arrest without a warrant; enter, if need be by force, any house, building or land; stop and search cars and other vehicles and if in the course of these activities by the police or British Servicemen a person refuses to answer questions he is guilty of an offence. Any person may also at any time have his movements and his place of residence restricted and determined for him by the police.

To cap it all, by Sec. 2(3) of the 1922 Act the police may arrest a person for failing to inform them that *some other* person has acted *or is about to act* in contravention of the Regulations.

The mind boggles at so many restrictions, at such a catalogue (which is in no way complete) of breaches of democratic rights, the last mentioned being a quite extraordinary extension of the criminal offences created by the Act. No wonder the celebrated solicitor W. H. Thompson, after considering the Act, was moved to say it "ought to make constitutional lawyers rise in mutiny."

Mention should also be made here of the Flags and Emblems (Displayed) Act of 1954 whereby a person who displays the Irish flag against the wishes of the police may be fined £500 and imprisoned for five years.

Although the Special Powers Act was passed originally for one year only it was renewed annually from 1922 to 1933, when a new Act provided that it should remain in force "until Parliament otherwise determines."

In 1947 the Attorney-General speaking in the Northern Ireland Parliament said:

> "To my mind the need for this Act and the Regulations made thereunder will never pass away for the reason that totally false ideas are being held up to the young and enthusiastic people. . . . Perhaps in fifty or 100 years it might be proper for the Minister of Home Affairs of that date, if there had been good conduct for, say, fifty years, to think of repealing this. . . ."

That is still the official view of the Stormont Government, on the grounds that an "emergency" exists. But what sort of "emergency" is it that exists for thirty-six years and is expected to last another fifty years at least? Rather can it be said that these powers are a contributory factor to the uneasy situation in Northern Ireland. Would not a tense situation arise in Britain if such powers and practices were operated here?

Britain's Responsibility

Northern Ireland has the largest police force per head of the population in the world and they are armed with revolvers and Sten guns even in the streets of Belfast. Such a position and these police powers can only lead to tyranny, the undermining of liberty and the deterioration of the police force itself, which is what has happened.

Yet the British Government does nothing to stop these things although it has the power. In 1921 Britain partitioned Ireland under threat of full scale war without a General Election being held either in Ireland or in Britain to decide the issue. The result is two states in Ireland, the Republic of Ireland comprising twenty-six counties and Northern Ireland comprising six counties. The six counties are economically and politically dependent on the British Government at Westminster and are constitutionally part of the U.K. They have their own Parliament which claims to uphold all the principles of English law and the British Constitution but it has no constituent power.

Its legislative authority extends by Sec. 4 of the Government of Ireland Act 1920 to the making of laws for peace, order and good government, with most other matters "Excepted" or "Reserved" to the British Parliament at Westminster. It cannot legislate on those matters which are reserved to Westminster and which include:

Excepted Matters

1. The Crown
2. Making of peace or war
3. The Royal Forces
4. Treaties, foreign relations and the appointment of diplomats

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5. Treason, aliens and naturalisation
6. Foreign trade and navigation
7. Wireless telegraphy
8. Aerial navigation
9. Coinage
10. Income Tax and customs duties
11. Trade marks, designs, copyrights, patents.

Reserved Matters

1. Postal Service
2. Public Records Office
3. Supreme Court of Judicature
4. Certain matters in connection with Universities, Colleges and affairs of local authorities.

Presumably the Northern Ireland Government, which in the legislative field has, on paper at least, less independence than had Ireland between 1782 and 1800, has so little legislative power left to it by the Imperial Government that it has spent its time building up the enormous code of repressive law of which it boasts. No doubt the British Government handed over the preservation of order in order that it might be operated in such a way that the odium attached to others.

Even on the "preservation of peace, order and good government" however, the Westminster Government remains supreme, for Sec. 75 of the Government of Ireland Act 1920 (which has not been repealed or amended by the Ireland Act 1949 or by any other statute) provides that:

> "Notwithstanding the establishment of the Parliament of Northern Ireland, or anything contained in this Act, the supreme authority of the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall remain unaffected and undiminished over all persons, matters and things in Northern Ireland and every part thereof."

Section 6 of the same Act confirms this position by providing that where any Act of the Northern Ireland Government within its competence and relating to Northern Ireland conflicts with an Act of Westminster the latter shall prevail. Similarly it provides that the Northern Ireland Parliament has no power to repeal or alter any Act passed by the Imperial Parliament extending to Northern Ireland even though it deals with a matter with respect to which the Northern Ireland Parliament has power to make laws.

As the British Home Secretary, Mr. R. A. Butler, and other M.P.s have said they can do nothing about the Special Powers in Northern Ireland, this point is of some importance.

What a contrast exists between the fine words of Britain's imperialist rulers and their deeds which they try so hard to hide!

Elections Gerrymandered

To all this could be added the more widely known examples of the destruction of democracy in Northern Ireland and in particular the gerrymandering of election boundaries to produce unrepresentative results, of which the following is only one example.

	Nationalist percentage	Nationalist Seats	Unionist Seats
Armagh ..	.. 57.2	8	12
Enniskillen	.. 55.8	7	14
Omagh ..	.. 62	9	12

Of course most of the things set out here are nothing new to anyone familiar with the same pattern in the colonies, but in Northern Ireland the practice has been in operation so long and is so near home as to justify careful study if its spread to Britain, where such dictatorial powers are held in cold storage for future use under the Emergency Powers Act as well as other statutes and judicial precedents, is to be prevented.

The Labour movement and the people must be roused to do all they can both in Britain and Northern Ireland to ensure the destruction of the Special Powers, and the police state built upon them. A new impetus has been given to such campaigning since the Mallon and Talbot trial focused fresh attention on the state of affairs outlined, to which publicity has been given in various ways by the Connolly Association and—despite a general press censorship—in the *Daily Worker*, the *New Statesman* and the *Manchester Guardian*. This measure of publicity and the resolutions and letters it has provoked, particularly from trade union and Labour Party organisations, have caused a great deal of consternation in the Northern Ireland Government which fears any democratic advance.

Such publicity and activity by both the British and Irish Labour movements and progressive forces, if increased sufficiently can undoubtedly have striking results. They cannot only help bring about "the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland", which the *British Road to Socialism* describes as "necessary to end the enforced partition of Ireland . . . ", but they are part of the "many-sided, consistent and revolutionary battle for democracy" which Lenin considered a vital part of the proletariat's preparations for victory over the bourgeoisie.

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Robert Owen and Co-operative Production

Betty Grant

ROBERT OWEN is associated in our minds with Co-operation. But his proposals, and his purpose, were something very different from the modern Co-operative movement with which we are familiar. For Owen and his followers were interested in co-operative *production* as the essential part of a new system of society, and the retailing of goods over the counter was only a means to an end so far as they were concerned. For that matter, even the Rochdale Pioneers of 1844, who are claimed by the modern movement as its origin and inspiration, intended their tiny grocery cupboard to be a stepping-stone to their ambitious "Object":

> "That as soon as practicable the society shall proceed to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education and government; or, in other words, to establish a self-supporting home colony of united interests, and assist other societies to establish such colonies."

What did they mean by "a self-supporting home colony of united interests"? How does this compare with the "co-operative communities" of the Owenites, and why did this idea appeal so much to the working class in the early 19th century? How is this ideal related to the actual experiments in co-operative production by practical working men and trade unions on the one hand, and by the retail Co-operative societies on the other?

In fact there were a number of different kinds of co-operative or collective activity in the 19th century which are usually lumped together under the name of Co-operative Production. Motives and incentives were different, as well as forms of organisation and ultimate result.

In this article I cannot do more than give a very sketchy outline of various co-operative productive efforts of the 19th century (using examples from the standard history on the subject by Benjamin Jones*) and then try to show what was really involved in Owenism and the kind of influence it has had on the working class.

* *Co-operative Production*, by Benjamin Jones, 1894. This 815-page book was based on research in contemporary journals, and makes fascinating reading.

A Variety of Efforts

The general picture of co-operative productive societies (or "producers' co-operatives") in the 19th century shows three characteristics: most of them were small; most of them were short-lived; and, unlike the trade union movement, there was no line of development from the purely local and specialised to the national and all-embracing. The apparent exceptions were of two kinds:

(1) The commercially successful business ventures such as the "co-operative" cotton mills which flourished from the 1860's onwards and which (as Beatrice Webb pointed out in her book on Co-operation) turn out to be no more than joint-stock companies with their capital dispersed amongst large numbers of mainly working class shareholders. (These have been called "Working Class Limiteds".)

(2) The productive departments attached to retail and wholesale Co-operative societies, and geared to the needs and demands of the consumer members. This highly important form of "co-operative production", which has made the retail movement as independent and powerful as it is, was developed on quite different lines and principles from the activities normally meant by co-operative production in the 19th century, and will therefore not be dealt with in this article.

In 1892, according to evidence given to the Royal Commission on Labour, there were 150 co-operative productive societies in Britain, with about 25,000 members. But these figures give no idea at all of the number of societies throughout the century, for these ventures nearly all had a short life. Some lasted only two or three years, some less, and some for a generation or so; a very few lasted much longer. At any time a group of working men somewhere might be setting up a new co-operative productive society, not in the least daunted by failures of the past; while somewhere else a venture started in hope would be closed down in debt.

At any one time there might be several hundreds of these societies, purely local and often very small. At the height of the Owenite movement in 1832 there were between 400 and 500 societies in the country, most of which died young. There was another spurt in the 1840's. Then at the tail end of the Chartist period the "Christian Socialists" stim-

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ulated the creation of Working Men's Associations for "associative production". In the same period a few "Redemption Societies" appeared.

In the 1850's and 1860's workers in particular trades tried to employ themselves collectively. Men on strike against wage-cuts walked out and set themselves up in business. Trade unions opened workshops to employ their unemployed members. In Lancashire and the West Riding ambitious cotton and woollen mills were set going by working-class investment. In the 1870's some miners' county unions, tempted by the high price of coal, formed co-operative societies to buy and work coal mines—their efforts are described by Benjamin Jones in a chapter called ominously: "Colliery Failures."

Between 1862 and 1880 no less than 163 registered societies started up and closed down again; there may have been others not registered. This is besides those in existence before 1862 or surviving after 1880. An analysis of 143 co-operative productive societies in existence in 1891 shows: thirty-three dairying; twenty-two textiles; twenty-one boot and shoe; nine corn-milling; three printers; fifty-five miscellaneous, of which about half were bakeries. These "miscellaneous" trades are not listed separately here. But in an earlier period (1862-80), in addition to the trades mentioned above, workers had tried self-employment in tailoring, hatmaking, building, boilermaking, coal mining, cabinet making, and no doubt many other jobs grouped together as "sundry trades".

The societies formed in the second half of the century were all of this kind, that is, producing some specific kind of goods. But in the earlier period the Owenite societies had included a variety of craftsmen, each producing his own wares; sometimes they got to the stage of buying or renting land which they worked collectively or in allotments, and in a few cases a real Owenite community was attempted.

All these varied activities took up a great deal of time, money, energy, and mental absorption. What were these "co-operators" aiming at? What did they achieve? What conclusions can we draw from all this effort?

Owen's "Parallelograms"

Owen's plan for co-operative communities was derived from two sources. First, his experience at New Lanark as manager of a cotton mill combined with living quarters had shown him the possibility of organising family life and leisure, together with work, on a community basis. Secondly, his acquaintance with the writings of John Bellers, a Quaker business man of the late 17th century (whose works Owen republished in 1818) helped him to formulate a similar scheme for settling destitute families communally upon the land where, by a combination of agriculture and manufactures, they would become not merely self-supporting but profitable to those who provided the initial capital. (It was the rectangular plan of the communal buildings that led Cobbett to call this scheme "Mr. Owen's Parallelograms of Paupers.")

Owen's genuine dislike of the injustice and poverty of existing society led him next to develop this scheme into a broader plan for a "new society," the economic units of which would be communal settlements of about twelve hundred persons combining agriculture with manufactures. These "villages of unity and mutual co-operation," as Owen called them, were not at this stage egalitarian, nor without drones, for the four classes of people who would be admitted into each village were: (1) the aged and infirm, and able-bodied unemployed, i.e. "paupers"; (2) "those who are without property," who will work for the fourth class; (3) "labourers, artisans and tradesmen with property from £100 to £2,000 each"; and (4) "persons unwilling or unable to be productively occupied, possessing from £1,000 to £20,000 each, and who by their capital will employ the second class." (See *Further Development of the Plan for the Relief of the Poor and the Emancipation of Mankind,* 1817).

In the better-known *Report to the County of Lanark* (1820) the drones are omitted. The villages are now to be formed *either* (1) at the instance and under the control of landowners, large capitalists, charitable trusts, or parishes and counties; *or* (2) "by associations of the middle and working classes of farmers, mechanics and tradesmen, to relieve themselves from the evils of the present system," and these persons "should be governed by themselves" through an elected committee. At last the "Owenite co-operative community" begins to emerge!

These were of course, only paper schemes. It was through actual experiments in community living (in America, Britain and Ireland) and—more important—through the practical interest of real flesh-and-blood "farmers, mechanics and tradesmen" in the possibilities of collective production and collective marketing of produce, that Owen's plans began to come to life.

The best way to evaluate Owen's paper schemes up to 1820 is to read them. (They have been published in the Everyman's Library as *A New View of Society,* edited by G. D. H. Cole.) What must strike any reader nowadays is the complete absence of any consciousness of the class struggle. Existing society is condemned as irrational, unjust to "the poor", etc., but it is never analysed. The new society is described as though in being, but the steps by which it would have to be wrested from the present ruling class are never hinted at—indeed, Owen never considered this difficulty.

This aspect of Owenism is important because it set the tone for all later practice and theory of Co-

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operative Production. It is not unfair to say that in essence the Owenite ideal of co-operative communities was an evasion of the class struggle, an attempt to escape from capitalism without destroying it, an attempt to *contract out* of capitalism and build another economic and social system within the physical boundaries of a capitalist country, without disturbing or being disturbed by the economic and political power of the capitalist class. All plans for Co-operative Production were tainted with this delusion to a greater or lesser degree.

Ideology of the "Little Man"

During the 1820's and 1830's Owen's idea of co-operative communities—or self-supporting villages—became immensely popular amongst intelligent, practical working men, many of whom were not "escapists" at all but took part in the class struggles of the period.

The explanation lies in the survival into this period of large numbers of "independent producers," the backbone of the pre-capitalist stage of production. It is true that industrial capitalism had already encroached seriously on their livelihood—by cornering raw materials, by taking control of or mechanising some of the processes, by dislocating the market for home-produced goods, and so on. But what matters here is not the actual number of working men who were genuinely independent, but the very much larger number who had this kind of independence as their ideal: those, for example, who had already been driven into wage-labour or into destitution or saw themselves threatened by this fate, those already in the grip of a capitalist middleman, those working as apprentices or journeymen for a small master with hopes of setting up in business on their own account some day. All these working men held a common ideal—what might be called the ideology of the "little man". This was the dominant ideology in the working classes right up to the middle of the century—the end of the Chartist period. The evidence for this can be found in the journals and programmes of Radicals and Chartists.

Connected with this ideology was the popularity of the belief that working men, the "productive classes", were "entitled to the full fruits of their labour". By this, economic writiers meant freedom from exploitation by owners of capital, monopolisers of the means of production. Working men interpreted this as freedom to work with their own tools and sell the product in open market at their own price—the ideal of all independent producers. Those who still worked with their own tools needed a market, those who were already wage-workers hankered after their own tools (I am speaking, of course, of skilled adult males, not the women and children who were exploited as machine minders in the mills). This was the real incentive behind the political movements of this period. The *Communist Manifesto* had not yet been written, and there was no conception of the future role of the *wage-working* class.

But amongst working men there was a divergence of opinion as to method. Those who adopted Owenism believed it possible to establish a regular and prosperous home market in the form of organised communities of producers, without a head-on clash with the capitalist class or its government. Those who took the Radical and Chartist way believed it imperative to fight first for the political power to reorganise society in the interests of the producers. In this article we are only concerned with the Owenite solution.

At first sight it might seem a paradox that the most individualisistic of men should accept an apparently collective or communistic form of society. But here we have to be cautious. The plan for co-operative communities materialised in only a very few cases; none were bona fide communities of working men (some included cranks like the Simple Lifers who went barefoot and ate only uncooked food, some were organised from above by a landowner), and all ended in failure. But does this matter? Even Owen hesitated between communal living—the "parallelogram", which is illustrated on the front page of his journal *The Crisis* and looks like an Oxbridge college ranged round its grassy courtyard or (dare one say it?) like a prison reformer's ideal prison—and what he called on other occasions "agricultural and manufacturing villages", rather like the ideal of Thomas Spence. I suspect that when watchmakers and locksmiths, tailors and shoemakers, talked of co-operative communities they thought of villages, not parallelograms. In any case, community *living* was not essential to the plan. What was essential was a regular local market for home-produced goods, including food and clothing.

Was it still possible in the 1830's to set up such economic units in a capitalist country? The only answer must be that intelligent and practical working men believed it was possible. Except for a very few industries where machinery was already accepted as necessary (e.g. coalmining, iron and steel, cotton spinning—but not yet weaving), a great deal of the ordinary consumer goods were still being produced with hand tools or simple machines. Most of farming was still done without expensive machinery, and there was a widespread belief in the greater productivity per acre of spade husbandry. Hundreds of thousands of working men still believed themselves capable of supporting their families from the proceeds of their own labour.

Tea Chests as Stepping-Stones

The evidence for this belief is in the co-operative societies which sprang up all over the country in the

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heyday of Owenism, round about 1830. These societies were in the first place little grocery stores—sometimes only a chest of tea bought wholesale for resale to members at a small profit. Let the Brighton society, which popularised this scheme, explain its purpose. An initial fund would be raised from savings, to buy groceries, the profit to be used to buy a bigger stock of goods, and so on:

> "The society will be able now to find work for some of its own members, the whole produce of whose labours will be common property. . . . As the capital accumulates still further, it will employ all the members . . . When the capital has accumulated sufficiently, the society may purchase land, live upon it, cultivate it themselves, and produce any manufactures they please, and so provide for all their wants of food, clothing, and houses. The society will then be called a community." (With the proviso that "if the members choose to remain in a town" they can still get the benefits of the society outlined above.)

This was the ideal behind the grocery stores of the Owenite societies. It was also the ideal behind the more ambitious scheme of "Equitable Labour Exchanges" (started by Owen in London and imitated in other places), which were markets to which members could bring their home-made wares, receiving for them vouchers (called Labour Notes) entitling them to other goods of equal value. The Bristol co-operative society, formed in 1832 by "a few persons of various trades," announced its intention of forming such a "Labour Exchange" which, by taking a commission, would build up a fund to make possible a larger trade in agricultural and manufactured produce, "and eventually to rent or purchase land, upon which to build our own houses, and live in community," each contributing his share of labour and receiving all the necessaries of life.

This was still the ideal behind the grocery store started in Rochdale in 1844, as shown in the "Objects" of that society. As late as the 1850's the Leeds Redemption Society (aiming at the "redemption" of the working classes from exploitation "by uniting the labour of all for the benefit of all") was trying to make a success of a 220-acre farm in South Wales on which they had hoped to settle "the smaller handicraft trades" first, and then to build factories for "the more important branches of manufactures". In much later days old Owenites who belonged to the new "Rochdale" type of retail co-operative societies tried to remind co-operators that selling goods over the counter was not really the be-all and end-all of co-operation.

Home Colonies

It is not possible or necessary to follow through the history of these early co-operative societies. We should look now at the main trends of later years.

After a disastrous excursion into syndicalism in 1834—when Owenites converted the building workers' trade union into a Builders' Guild which was supposed to supersede all capitalist building firms—the earlier idea of Co-operative Communities was revived in the 1840's through the propaganda of the *Home Colonisation Society*, created by Owen with the help of moneyed people. In an appeal for investments to establish "self-supporting Home Colonies", the aim is stated to be: "a secure and profitable investment for capital, and an effectual means most materially to benefit all classes of society by giving a *right* application to the now greatly misdirected powers of the human faculties, and of physical and moral science." In a lecture given in 1841 Owen explains that Home Colonies are but a regrettable transitional stage on the way to the "Rational System", necessitated by the "inferior habits now formed in the lower classes", and their "limited experience" which prevents them from understanding "the feelings or mind of those trained in other habits and a more extended experience"; in the Home Colonies the children of these inferior people were to be trained up to the standard of their betters.

But this revolting snobbery was purged away by the interest taken in the scheme by trade unionists. In 1848 the National Association of United Trades was advocating "a system of self-employment upon the principle of associated labour . . . to supersede the old injurious system of strikes and turnouts (by) the establishment of colonies combining . . . shoemaking and carpentering, manufacturing and agricultural arrangements", the object being to absorb surplus labour "which, by reducing wages, leads to strikes and all their concomitant evils". That was one point of view.

In the same year a new body was formed by London trade unionists—the National Organisation of Trades—and its eight-point programme included a demand that the Government should "introduce a bill establishing self-supporting home colonies, to give immediate employment to the numerous but compulsorily unemployed of our population." Here was a new, and quite un-Owenite, idea attached to Owen's "home colonies"—the idea of Government responsibility for providing the unemployed with a livelihood. This particular demand, connected with the aim of land nationalisation and formulated as a demand that "waste land" should be bought and equipped by the Government for use by the unemployed, crops up again and again—in Bronterre O'Brien's *National Reform League*, in the programme of the *Chartist Convention* of 1851, in the *Land and Labour League* associated with the First International, and much later, in the unemployed agitations of the

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S.D.F. In 1906, indeed some unemployed men in Manchester and East London, assisted by the local I.L.P. and S.D.F., took possession of some waste land and began to cultivate it collectively—but this incident belongs to the story of unemployed struggles rather than to that of Co-operative Production!

"Trades-Manufactories"

This was one line of development from Owenism. But trade unionists were also interested in Co-operative Production on their own account. In 1827 William Thompson, the best-known of the economic writers who adopted Owen's solution of co-operative communities, suggested in his book *Labor Rewarded* (subtitled: "How to secure to Labor the whole products of its exertions") that trade unions should purchase buildings and machinery and set up "Trades-Manufactories" in which to employ any members out of work "through disagreement with their employer". Developing this idea, he pointed out that if labourers, who were at present at the mercy of those who owned the land, raw materials, buildings, tools and machines, would acquire these forms of capital collectively and become "capitalist-labourers", each owning a share of the trade union workshop, this would provide a slight check on capitalist exploitation. But he warned that these "Trades-Manufactories" would be vulnerable to trade depression, competition etc., and advised them to rent or buy land and grow their own food; then later, by admitting other kinds of craftsmen (including intellectual and artistic) the project would become, in effect, an Owenite community.

Wage-workers extracted from this proposal just so much as seemed to them practicable—the "Trades-Manufactory" or workshop, producing one type of goods. There were a number of experiments, some connected with trade disputes, some not, but none with any visionary ideal in view. Some were successful. In Manchester, a Co-operative Dyeing Manufactory was flourishing in 1832, employing 120 persons, mostly members and their children. A report says: "They have found out the beneficial effects of having the machinery in their own hands." In Paisley in 1835 "some half-dozen workmen . . . having accumulated a small sum by careful saving, commenced the Colinslie Print Works." In 1844 forty men in Suffolk started a "Spade Husbandry Association" on a twenty-eight acre farm, employing sixteen of their members at 14s. per week, and producing twice as much per acre as neighbouring farms. In 1852 the Universal Family Society of Salford, starting with twenty-three members and a fund of 7s. 6d., had saved up to buy a loom and were now working with ten looms and selling £1,000 worth of shirtings and calicoes per year. There were, no doubt, many more examples.

Projects started in a trade dispute were not so successful, mainly because the slump conditions that led to wage-cuts made it unlikely that any new business could sell its goods. Yet pathetic attempts were made, especially in the early 1850's. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers, after its defeat in the lockout of 1852, decided that "all our future operations should be directed in promoting the system of self-employment in associative workshops, as the best means of regulating the conditions of labour." So they bought an ironworks in Southwark, and the secretary of the Union, William Allen, looked forward to seeing in a few years' time "the land studded with workshops belonging to the workers." In the same year some ironworkers in East London who had been involved in the lockout borrowed money to buy an ironworks in Bethnal Green. Some silk and velvet weavers, also in Bethnal Green, rebelled against long hours and a threatened wage-cut by buying themselves seven jacquard looms and weaving dress material for ladies who advanced them cash to buy their silks. Plush weavers in Banbury, on strike against a wage-cut, put their savings into a business of their own, but "were sadly in want of both money and orders".

The "Working Class Limiteds" of the 1860's and 1870's have already been mentioned. The most important were those in cotton and coal mining where, tempted by boom conditions, trade unionists and co-operators and many other working-class and middle-class shareholders flourished for a while on the profits from wage-labour. The coal boom was short, and thousands of miners lost their whole savings. In cotton the boom lasted from the Cotton Famine of the early 1860's until the Great Depression which began in the later 1870's. Perhaps the best comment on the effect of working-class shareholding in cotton was the remark made about Oldham in 1875: "There is a hush upon politics, once so fiercely rife in the town."

A hush upon politics; an escape from the class struggle. The two extreme forms of Co-operative Production meet upon this ground: the idealistic Owenite vision of a new society in which no one would exploit anyone else; and the participation of the working class in industrial exploitation within the capitalist system. (I use the word "exploitation" in the strict sense. The "Working Class Limiteds" employed wage-labour like any other company; early attempts to apply "co-operative principles" of profit sharing as between capital and labour were defeated by shareholders who—as one of the Rochdale Pioneers put it—"only cared for the eternal 'divi'.")

In between these two points of view was the ideal of making workers independent of capitalists by setting themselves up in business—no longer as individual craftsmen, but collectively through their

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trade unions. All through the second half of the 19th century continual efforts were made by advocates of Co-operative Production (e.g. in the Co-operative Union) to win the trade union movement for this idea.

What was the total effect upon the Labour movement of all these varied experiments in, and discussions about, Co-operative Production? When the best has been said—that it brought out the qualities of initiative and perseverance, that it gave workers experience in planning and marketing, that it created a confidence in the ability of workers to "do it themselves", and so on—the harsh judgment must, I think, be that in theory it created confusion and in practice it was a distraction. There is no denying that Co-operative Production fostered the illusions that the class struggle does not exist or that if it does it can be evaded; that political power in the hands of the working class is not essential, since the "Co-operative Commonwealth" can be achieved simply by adding co-operative society to co-operative society; that the capitalist class in power is not a ruthless enemy of working class progress but would sit back and watch the working class gradually encroaching upon its economic empire, nibbling away its industrial capacity and stealing its markets—and do nothing to prevent it. Do not these illusions still exist in the modern Co-operative movement?

"Why do the Rich Smile?"

Co-operative Production did not pass without criticism at the time. In the heyday of Owenism, leading Radicals like Bronterre O'Brien exposed the fallacy of imagining that the old society could be replaced by the new simply by a multiplication of parallelograms over the land. As O'Brien put it (in the *Poor Man's Guardian* in 1835):

> "Where the few make the Government, the Government will govern only for the few. . . . In England the Government is made *by* and *for* the middle and upper classes [read: industrial capitalist and landowning classes] alias for those who live by fraud and force on the plundered industry of the poor. So long as the Government continues in such hands, neither Mr. Owen nor anybody else will effect the slightest practical change."

This point was understood by others besides Radicals. The self-styled Christian Socialists, who were really supporters of the status quo and wanted to divert the working classes away from the dangerous Chartist movement, encouraged workers to turn to Co-operative Production (which they renamed "Associative Workshops," after Louis Blanc's efforts in France). Let these gentlemen condemn themselves by the pen of their most famous spokesman, Charles Kingsley. In 1852, in answer to criticisms from his own class, he wrote a pamphlet called *Who are the Friends of Order*? in which the following remarks occur:

> "We tell people simply to do their duty in that state of life to which God has called them." As for the "destructive doctrines" [Chartism] which "were at their height among the working classes several years before we intermeddled, [these] aroused us to try if we could not supply an antidote to the poison . . . there has been a perceptible and rapidly increasing improvement in the tone of the working class publications of late. . . . " As for the idea of "Associative Workshops," this has an effect "in calming and civilising the minds of the working men."

With this going on around him Ernest Jones, shortly after he and other Chartists had completed prison sentences for their political activities, wrote in a long article about the Co-operative movement:

> "Why do the rich smile at it? Because they know it will prove in the long run harmless as regards them—because they know it has always failed, hitherto, to subvert their power."

The rich can still smile. Their power is still unsubverted.

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Soviet Education: new proposals

Joan Simon

"From the factory system budded, as Robert Owen has shown us in detail, the germ of the education of the future, an education that will, in the case of every child over a given age, combine productive labour with instruction and gymnastics, not only as one of the methods of adding to the efficiency of production, but as the only method of producing fully developed human beings. . . .

"There is no doubt that when the working class comes into power, as inevitably it must, technical instruction, both theoretical and practical, will take its proper place in the working-class schools. . . ."

Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Chapter XV, Section 9.

SOME far-reaching proposals for new developments in Soviet education, approved by the Presidium of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., were recently set before the public in the form of a lengthy memorandum by N. S. Khrushchov which was published in full in *Pravda*, *Izvestia* and *Komsomolskaya Pravda* on September 21st, 1958.

The proposals derive directly from the recommendations of the Twentieth Congress. In other words, it is after widespread discussion and certain changes introduced during the past two-and-a-half years that plans are now advanced for a fundamental reorientation of school education.

The Twentieth Congress, after enumerating noteworthy educational advances, went on to note "serious defects in cultural development". In the general school system the greatest shortcoming "is a certain discrepancy between school curricula and practical activity. Young people leaving school are not sufficiently prepared for practical work". A rapid introduction of polytechnical training means not only adding "new subjects acquainting the student with the rudiments of industrial and agricultural production, but also that the student be accustomed to practical work at factories, collective and state farms. . . ." In higher education the principal tasks emphasised were

> "all-round improvement of the quality of training on the basis of closer association with practical production; more rational geographical distribution of higher educational institutions; closer contact with industry; bringing programmes of study into conformity with the present level of technology. . . ."[1]

[1] *Resolution on the Report of the Central Committee;* the latter includes more detailed references to education.

The present memorandum, which follows on a speech delivered by N. S. Khrushchov at the Thirteenth Congress of the Young Communist League, devotes only a few paragraphs to educational developments during the past forty years in order to concentrate on deficiencies which have lately become increasingly apparent. In the light of these there has been growing criticism of the universal ten-year school, as too academic and divorced from life, and alternative proposals for the final two years of secondary education are now advanced. Before outlining these it may be as well to put the memorandum into the perspective of recent assessments of Soviet education here and to relate the criticisms made to the tasks and problems of Soviet schools.

I

It is only comparatively recently that knowledge of Soviet educational achievements has spread in England and America. Since Sputnik I, in particular, successive official and expert delegations have brought back facts and figures, details of curricula and personal impressions which they have added up to make an impressive picture; not only of the rapid spread of secondary schooling but also of the extent of college and university education and the high standard of work, particularly in science and technology.[2] In fact, a point has been reached where well over a million pupils matriculate at seventeen and 450,000 places

[2] The Government White Paper, *Technical Education* (H.M.S.O., 1956) gives the following comparative figures for engineering education: the Soviet Union produces 280 engineers per million of the population, the U.S.A. 136 per million, Britain 57 per million.

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are available annually at higher educational institutions.

If English politicians and educationists have stressed the importance of catching up with the Russians, there has been even more concern to do so in America; both as regards increasing facilities for higher scientific and technological education and raising standards in the schools. In short, it has become generally recognised that Soviet achievements in higher education are not only impressive in themselves but also rest on a broad educational base, on nothing less than a cultural revolution.

This, of course, is the achievement of only four decades. But it is sometimes overlooked that development has been particularly rapid during the past twelve years, since the war. It has been in the course of tackling an immense reconstruction problem that education has been so greatly expanded.

In a sense this has always been the case in the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Government first took power, over two-thirds of the population was illiterate, many peoples had no alphabet nor written language. The eradication of illiteracy was a primary task, which was tackled at all levels, through the organisation of study circles, evening schools, factory schools and a host of other means as well as by building up a school system for the children.

The latter task alone was formidable, against the background of economic effort being made at that time. The first stage was the establishment of the primary school—universal, compulsory four-year education from seven to eleven or twelve; the next, the development of the middle school—that is, compulsory seven-year education up to the age of fourteen or fifteen, though this was not universal throughout country districts before the war. After the war the aim became the general establishment of the two-year upper school—that is ten-year schooling for all from seven to seventeen. Efforts have been concentrated on providing this, first in the towns and then throughout the entire country by 1960.

During all this time, great stress has been laid on a genuinely universal education and high standards of work. It was in 1936, when the compulsory seven-year school was developing rapidly, that the Central Committee of the Communist Party, summing up a protracted discussion, laid down that all forms of intelligence testing should be banned from the schools; that in future there should be no segregating of children in different schools on the grounds of their supposed level of "innate intelligence", as had recently been happening, particularly in Moscow.

No Selection or Streaming

Today there is no selection nor streaming of any kind in the Soviet school; all children follow the same course and the aim is that all should complete it and gain the diploma, or matriculate. Competent observers, attempting to make a valid comparison, have concluded that the standard reached at the close of the ten-year school is equivalent to something between our G.C.E. "O" and "A" levels; that is, a standard set for the top forms in English grammar schools is achieved by the vast majority of children who are in ten-year secondary schools in the Soviet Union.[1]

A recent delegation of English educationists remarked on the sharp contrast between "the doctrine of our 1944 Education Act that school education should be adapted to the aptitude and abilities of the individual pupil" and the Soviet belief that "the vast majority of children can with profit follow the same education curriculum at least up to the age of seventeen". This partly reflects, they suggest, a philosophy of life which emphasises the importance of "environment as against heredity and of hard work and staying power as against innate ability"; but rests also on a reasoned refutation of "intelligence" testing and experience of the great influence that a systematic education can have on children's development. But Russian teachers also admit to a social purpose behind the common curriculum:

> "They do not want to abolish the old class distinctions only to replace them by new . . . based on different forms of education. They think that a common educational experience up to the age of seventeen is the right . . . foundation for the kind of society they are trying to build."[2]

It is easy to see that the desire to provide a real secondary education for all, a systematic course of study to a high standard, could militate against necessary changes in the curriculum. Initially the only full secondary schools were those inherited from the past. Pressure to prepare increasing numbers for the university, coupled with firm adherence to a common course of study, necessarily tended to perpetuate a predominantly academic course. Here, it must be recalled that Soviet teachers and parents had their fill of experiment in the schools in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties; when almost anything that looked like the latest scientific or progressive development—from self-government by the children and the Dalton plan of studies to mass "intelligence" testing by

[1] See the article by G. C. T. Giles, *Anglo-Soviet Journal* XIV/1, 1953.

[2] *Education in the Soviet Union.* A Report of a Study Tour submitted to the Educational Interchange Council, 43 Parliament Street, S.W.1.

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teams of psychometrists who instructed teachers how to run their schools—was tried out. All were eventually rejected in favour of a resumption of systematic teaching; the emphasis being rather on giving a new content to traditional subjects than on changing the curriculum itself.

This meant, to a considerable extent, a return to the pattern of the continental gymnasium, a school of an academic type, and it is this that has for long been criticised and is now condemned outright. But, if the idea that a bookish education is essentially the best form of education is a survival from the past, there has been a positive aspect to the insistence on reaching a high academic standard with all children. The eradication of old ideas and attitudes is by no means so easy a task as has sometimes been thought. Even the latest works on Soviet psychology find it necessary to expose the falsity of views about "innate powers", to stress that the child's development depends primarily on his conditions of life, his upbringing at home and in society, systematic teaching in school and the opening up of opportunity.[1] Here is another reason for resisting the introduction of anything like varying courses which could restrict further educational opportunity and vocational choice.

All this helps to explain why the proper end of the ten-year school should seem to be the university course; in other words, secondary education leads on to more education rather than into life. At first, of course, the need for specialists was paramount and the demand apparently insatiable. In fact, workers' faculties supplemented the existing secondary schools for a considerable period. Latterly, as the ten-year school has been widely established, recruitment has been chiefly through this and various factors have operated to make a university the goal of more and more pupils; not least the immense respect accorded to leading professional workers and the rewards (not merely financial) that accrue to those who give outstanding service to learning and science. With all eyes fixed on the achievements of leading scientists, and the strong attraction of new fields of research, it is small wonder that young people wish to qualify for such work.

[1] For this argument and details of the careful procedure whereby children are selected for special schools for the physically handicapped and mentally retarded, see the S.C.R. *Psychology Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1958 (1s. 10d. from 14 Kensington Square, W.8). The only other special schools are for children who show a special bent for arts which require early training; these schools (for music, theatre, ballet, etc.) take in children at seven or later and couple special instruction with general education.

The Negative Side

This is the positive side. But there is also a negative one. As the numbers matriculating at seventeen have increased, pressure on the universities has grown and more and more selection examinations have necessarily been introduced by individual colleges. Old attitudes have, therefore, cropped up again at this new level. Attention is concentrated on those going on to university. The impression is spread that those who fail to get a college place "have not made the grade", "have shown no abilities", in the words of the memorandum; it is these who must go to work. This view is diametrically opposed to the outlook of socialist society.

Young people naturally pick up this social attitude, inculcated to a considerable extent by the type and direction of their schooling, and regard work as something very second best. There have been many discussions about this in the Soviet press in recent years. One example is the complaint of a printing worker that his son, having got the idea that a university education is essential to any status in society, is ashamed to go into industry as a worker at the bench. Disturbed by an outlook so alien to socialism, the father wrote for advice to a well-known author whose reply, dealing with the whole problem, was published in the journal of the Union of Soviet Writers. The author, V. Kochetov, suggests that almost everyone is to blame for emphasising the value of certain professions at the expense of others which are the most fundamental of all:

> "You and I, millions of parents, hundreds of writers and thousands of artists, our newspapers and magazines, the wireless, the cinema, the theatre and the school. We have been carried away by the fact that all roads really lie open to the young people of our country. . . ."[1]

Another aspect of the same problem is that factories have been receiving the products of the ten-year school in growing numbers, instead of younger boys from trade schools. Though workers in charge of the seventeen-year-old entrants admit that their grounding in science and mathematics helps them to pick up some technological processes and understand the whole production cycle more easily, yet they have been equally emphatic that schools should give more polytechnical education; only then will young people be properly prepared to combine theoretical knowledge with practical work. There have been similar criticisms of university graduates. In early days, when specialists were few and ignorance widespread, it was neces-

[1] See *Soviet Youth*. Some Achievements and Problems. Excerpts from the Soviet press, translated and edited D. L. Meek.

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sary to persuade collective farmers to extend a sympathetic hearing to young agronomists, fresh from college and eager to share their knowledge but lacking all practical experience. Now the collective farmer himself is knowledgeable and what he expects from the agricultural college is a thoroughly competent specialist, well grounded in the field in which his science must be applied; not someone who has had his nose in books from the age of seven to twenty-three.

Here it should be noted that there has been consistent pressure about "polytechnisation" for years, but that much less progress seems to have been made than was once thought. The conception of the ten-year school was always linked with that of a polytechnical content, but the Twentieth Congress severely criticised educationists for failure to develop this aspect and the present memorandum is equally blunt. It looks at the figures which have impressed foreign educationists from the reverse angle and deplores the fact that the whole of the younger generation should be shut away from life and work in schools which pay too little attention to the world outside.

It is worth while recalling, therefore, that there have been new developments, particularly since 1956. The R.S.F.S.R. Ministry of Education introduced an experimental curriculum in over fifty schools last year; one which devotes a considerable amount of time to practical work both in school and at enterprises or farms connected with schools. Under this plan, boys and girls of sixteen to seventeen follow the ordinary curriculum for three days a week and work the remaining three days, in urban schools; while in the countryside, work is concentrated in the spring and study in the winter. In order not to overload pupils, the course of study is extended by one or two years to a leaving age of eighteen or nineteen. School staffs have been augmented by technologists and in addition to the normal final examination pupils also take a special test in their chosen subject and carry out a trial work assignment for an additional qualification; when working during practical training they are paid at apprentice rates or by collective farm work-day-unit rates. Following on this, the Academy of Education Sciences of the R.S.F.S.R. has drawn up a complete plan for reorganising the school system which has been discussed at conferences and in the press.[1]

Entry to Universities

Similarly there have recently been great changes in the rules governing entry to universities; these lay down that the majority of entrants should be those who have completed at least two years productive work in some enterprise and are recommended by public bodies. In fact, the latest regulations reserve 80 per cent of places for those in this category (including those demobilised from the Forces) and 20 per cent for applicants straight from school or technicum. Of the latter categories, all must now sit a competitive examination; there is no exemption from this for gold and silver medallists (those who end school with an "excellent" or "good" record).

This last proviso evidently relates to the memorandum's strong criticism of pressure by influential parents intent on getting their offspring into universities. This has begun with pressure on teachers in the matter of medals and gone on to even more blatant manoeuvring at the university entrance level; which has apparently too often been successful, vitiating the whole system of selection. One of the most popular plays in Moscow in 1955, originally written for the Youth Theatre but which aroused much wider interest, dealt trenchantly with this latter theme—indeed this whole problem; the offending parents being professors wire-pulling with colleagues behind the scenes.[2] It is partly as an outcome of this kind of thing that the majority of students in Moscow Colleges are children of the intelligentsia or office employees; only 30 per cent to 40 per cent are children of workers and collective farmers and even so these are rarely full-time students—a clearly abnormal situation, as the memorandum comments.

Meanwhile, university teachers are now welcoming the more mature students they are getting by the new entrance requirements, in much the same spirit as teachers here welcomed the F.E.T.S. students from among those demobilised after the war. Here are young men and women who know what they want to do in the world, on the basis of some real experience of life which also provides a sound foundation for specialised higher education. At the same time there has recently been much more time given to practical work in institutions of all kinds, and more stress on independent work by the students accompanied by reduction of lectures; though the new memorandum again underlines these two points.[3]

Many other facets of educational discussion and development during the past years could be men-

[1] This plan is not yet available here but for a discussion of it and other relevant articles see the current S.C.R. *Education Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 2. (1s. 8d.)

[2] This play was translated in a number of *Soviet Literature* in 1955 or 1956. This problem cannot, of course, properly be attributed solely to faults in the educational system.

[3] See the article by V. V. Yeliutin, U.S.S.R. Minister of Higher Education, *Anglo-Soviet Journal* XVII/3, 1956.

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tioned. In general, the prospect of shortening the working day has raised the question of widening educational facilities. There have, of course, been the changes relating to co-education and boarding schools. The overloading of children's time-tables, the excessive amount of homework and so on, has figured in parents' complaints and teachers' deliberations. At the other end of the scale have been criticisms of those who do no work—the idlers and Teddy Boys.

A relevant point, which the memorandum indirectly raises, is the tendency for provision at some schools to be almost too lavish; everything is done for the children, innumerable people look after their every need. The same is true in some colleges, even to the extent that an agricultural college employs a staff to run its farm while the students merely look on and use models of cows in the lecture room.

The other side of the picture is that too many schools still operate on a shift system because of shortage of buildings; and that in some parts of the country even the seven-year compulsory school is not in full operation. Indeed a startling assessment is given here, which contradicts the Twentieth Congress resolution and much else that has been said and written; namely that, according to figures issued by the Central Statistical Board of the U.S.S.R., only about 80 per cent of those who enter the first form of the seven-year school complete seven classes—the memorandum adds "this means we have far from fully realised the principle of obligatory seven-year education".

New Social Perspectives

All the shortcomings mentioned are brought into sharp relief in the light of the new economic plans and social perspectives. The gravamen of the charge against higher technological colleges, for instance, is that their work tends to lag behind the latest industrial developments; this can only be remedied by closer contact with practical production and economic life. In addition, the printing worker's complaint has swelled into a chorus of concern about the bias and direction of school education which affects the outlook of the whole new generation.

Against this background, stress is now laid on perfecting the basic eight-year school and making it genuinely universal and compulsory, while providing for the final two years of schooling and for technical education by a wide variety of means; primarily through forms of schooling and training organised in close connection with industry which can best prepare young people for work and life. This is a new phase of educational effort, in part directed to overcoming problems created by the very rapidity of advance up to now, using methods which have much in common with those of earlier days.

Efforts to concentrate all secondary education in the ten-year school have been too narrow, taking too little account of developments outside the schools. The kind of education given has been too academic, too exclusively directed towards the university and the system of selection for higher education has been grossly abused in some respects. From this there have stemmed social developments and attitudes inimical to socialism. The Central Committee has, therefore, intervened much as it did in the case of intelligence testing and school organisation in the 1930's; to ensure that the development of the public educational system is fully in accordance with socialist aims. The stage has not yet been reached when the division between mental and manual labour in society has been bridged; but, it is time to prepare for it, to bridge the gap, in the work of the school and college system. If everyone is to have the same kind of start in life, an education at one with social needs and aims, then a different kind of common system is needed; a common approach to work and learning combined, even if it may be in differently organised courses at the final stage of schooling.

Can new higher secondary schools and a system of advanced education on these lines be brought into being, if so what steps are necessary to make the transition? These are the questions with which the memorandum is concerned. Discussing them in terms of how schools can be brought closely into touch with life, with many critical comments on problems already mentioned, Khrushchov advocates a new direction for education and advances several alternative organisational proposals. These may now be summarised.

II

The first and most important need, if educational short-comings and a false social outlook are to be eliminated, is to ensure that every child entering school realises that he is preparing for useful work, for participation in the building of Communist society. Any work—at factory or collective farm, industrial establishment, machine and tractor station, office or shop—all honest useful work for society is honourable work and a necessity for all who live in and enjoy the benefits of society. Everyone must contribute his work to the construction and further development of Communist society and the chief task of the schools is to prepare the coming generation for life in this sense, to teach them a profound respect for socialist principles.

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This means that the schools must give an all-sided education, must produce young people with both a knowledge of the fundamentals of science and ability to do systematic physical labour; with a desire to be useful to society, to take an active part in production of the material values essential to it. There must be equal conditions in the upbringing of all citizens, and genuine equality of access to higher education for all who desire and deserve it. All young people, without any exception, must participate in productive work as an essential aspect of education, one which embraces the heroic traditions of the working class and collective farm peasantry.

What practical steps are necessary?

Two Stages

This aim seems to suggest the division of schooling into two stages. The first stage would be the compulsory seven- or eight-year school. The balance of opinion among education officers and parents seems to be in favour of eight years as providing the best framework for a sound general and polytechnical education; but it will be for the Union Republics to decide on this point in accordance with the prevailing conditions.

Serious attention must be given to the timetable and curriculum. At this first stage attention must be concentrated on the fundamentals of knowledge, polytechnical training and the teaching of habits of work, education in Communist ethics, the development of aesthetic taste, and physical education. But children must not be overburdened with work to the detriment of their health. Another consideration is that, whatever the equality of men and women in all fields of work, women also have additional tasks at home and enter special professions for which girls need some preparation; so that some provision must be made for cooking, dressmaking and so on. Material facilities in the schools must be greatly improved; shifts must be finally done away with and the necessary modern equipment guaranteed.

After this common basic stage, the second stage of schooling might proceed in various alternative ways. In some cases children might remain in school following a curriculum which lays the main emphasis on special vocational training. In urban areas, some children could, perhaps, attend either schools attached to a factory or trade schools; here they could go on with their studies but these would be intimately linked with vocational training in such a way as to combine knowledge of production with practical skill. In rural areas, pupils could also enter trade schools or receive special training in various branches of agriculture for two or three years.

We could do this, the memorandum continues. Let all boys and girls take a job in production after completing the eight-year school. This would involve placing in employment annually, in the immediate future, from 2 million to 3½ million adolescents, 40 per cent in towns and the rest in the countryside. This is no simple matter, the more so since managers of enterprises now take on those under eighteen only with great reluctance. However, here is a task of paramount importance to the Party and the state. It would be necessary to break down bureaucratic obstacles and charge the U.S.S.R. State Planning Committee to draw up a long term plan for placing school leavers in employment; a plan to be operated according to the conditions in each administrative area, so that adolescents can find employment where they live. A reserved quota for adolescents at enterprises would have to be considered; also the setting up of special shops, provision of suitable work-benches and strict observance of safety rules.

Young people who go straight to work must be able to learn a trade. One way might be training on the job, through short courses and team instruction; another, one- or two-year vocational schools whose course of training and organisation would need careful consideration. It may be advisable to teach a section of youth a specific trade at factory or agricultural schools (of the kind already mentioned) where they can also study general subjects. Until recently there were such schools which fully justified themselves, admitting lads and girls who had completed the basic school and turning out hundreds of thousands with a secondary education and a technical qualification. A considerable proportion of these, after two or three years at work, went on to take a university course and are now qualified engineers.

In rural areas, vocational training could be provided in connection with the broad network of eight-year schools, in the form of one-year or six-month courses on aspects of agricultural production. Such courses could also be organised at large state farms, machine and tractor and technical service stations.

Evening Schools

To complete a full secondary education, it is thought that evening schools may be the best method.[1] All young people in a factory should be able to follow such a course, should they desire it. It will probably also be necessary to have a system of education by correspondence, providing

[1] There are no details about hours for schooling either during the day or evening, nor any reference to the fact that young workers have a shortened working day.

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training to a high level; lectures could be published widely, instructional aids provided and the necessary consultations arranged. Evening schools should not train pupils only for higher educational establishments but should also deepen professional training. Ways should be considered of granting privileges to pupils who achieve good results, possibly by freeing them from work for two or three days a week so that this time can be devoted to study. In order not to overburden students, the course should probably be of three to four years; this aspect needs careful thought.

By such means, everyone will be provided with the opportunity of completing a secondary education according to the curriculum of the present ten-year school; but, instead of in a school divorced from life, in a training network which should be developed and perfected in every way. Some school leavers may not at first wish to study further, may not see the necessity; but when the desire to supplement their education does awake the opportunities will be there—given the desire, all can complete their education while taking part in the work of society.

This will ensure that young people embark on life as well prepared workers, participating through their labour in the creation of material values essential to Communist society. From the first, in the schools, children need to be orientated towards socially useful activity. Later, working in production while continuing to study, young people will more easily find their place in society, ascertain their own inclinations and desires. Having specialised in one field or another, and been tested in evening school, they may go on to the relevant higher educational establishment. At this point, Khrushchov interpolates: "I repeat there must be no exception in this matter, regardless of the standing of the parents in society and the posts they hold."

Long before the proletarian revolution Lenin wrote that universal education must be wedded to universal productive work; that everyone must participate in productive labour. Marx emphasised that children should work daily in production at a certain age as only then can they understand the full complexity and creativity of labour and become flesh and bone of the working collective. The aim of the proposals now set out is not to reduce the scale of secondary education but rather to improve the obligatory eight-year school and so to extend the network of evening and correspondence schools that all who wish can secure a full secondary and higher education.

All this implies that the introduction of universal secondary education on the lines hitherto envisaged will not now be expedient. The question is, should the system proposed be introduced or should existing ten-year schools be retained and required to introduce changes? There is the view that some full polytechnical secondary schools should be retained, with proper provision for productive labour, while a two-year record in production is also required before enrolment to college. This point needs thorough discussion, after which the best solution can be found. The new system of public education must also provide appropriate schools for particularly gifted children who early show an obvious bent for mathematics, music, the arts and who must receive the secondary education necessary for further study at specialised higher schools. This is essential to foster the talents of the people.

The transition to a new system would have to be carefully organised to ensure a continuous flow of entrants to higher schools. During a period of three to four years some existing ten-year schools could be retained. Possibly it might be expedient to pick from them children with a particular bent for physics, mathematics, draughtsmanship etc., and gather them at particular schools so that they are well grounded for entry to higher educational establishments.

Higher Education

The system of higher education also needs careful examination with the same points in mind. It must be reshaped and properly linked with production. Entrants must be those who display the greater ability and desire to continue with their studies; and not only the desires of the aspirant but also an assessment of his activities by public organisations—the trade unions and the Y.C.L.—will be a deciding factor in choosing young people who will justify the expense they incur and become useful specialists.

In the technical field particularly there must be a shift of emphasis to evening and correspondence courses. Perhaps during the first two or three years, studies should be combined with a job, in order to provide an opportunity of selecting from the army of youth who want to study those with whom this is not merely a passing fancy but a real thirst for knowledge combined with persistence and application to work. Then, for the third year, students could be freed from productive work for three days a week; and in the final two years freed altogether save for periods of practical training.

The provision of other courses must also be thoroughly considered so that all workers have more opportunities in their free time to study the arts, painting, music, the humanities. In this the state and particularly the trade unions should assist.

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A resumption of the practice of factories providing higher technical education should be considered; in the past many leading engineers have been trained by this method. Agricultural higher schools should probably combine education and productive work on seasonal lines; instruction being provided in farm institutes with adequate buildings, laboratories and a section of the farm for practical training. Ways of linking the work of universities, medical schools and other colleges with practice must also be properly thought out.

These proposals follow on what has already been said at the Thirteenth Congress of the Y.C.L., which has had a positive reception in the country. The questions raised should be discussed at a plenary meeting of the Central Committee since they concern millions, all society, and their correct solution is of the greatest importance to our society's further material and spiritual development. After such a discussion, it may be found appropriate to draw up theses enabling discussion throughout the country and then to convene a session of the Supreme Soviet where the whole matter is covered. Final concrete proposals come within the province of the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics. One thing is clear; an improvement in the entire field of public education is imperatively called for by life.

III

In discussing this vast project for reorganising the public educational system, commentators here have tended to reduce it to their own measure; to exclaim triumphantly, for instance, that the Soviet Union has decided to reintroduce the principle of selection. Obviously the aim of the proposals is precisely the contrary. It is to do away with what has developed into a vast selection machine for higher education—which has had many deleterious effects—and to provide, on the basis of a universal common school, wider access to all forms of further education.

What is sought is an education for all which is in tune with social life at every point, both with a socialist outlook and aims and with rapid scientific and technological advances. It has often been said in the past that schooling which concentrates on theory to the exclusion of practice provides an incomplete education but little has been done. The suggestion now is to correct the balance of studies in the basic school and to make the final two years of secondary education complete by bringing it more or less thoroughly into the world of work. Schools, rather than being academies apart, with a predominantly academic outlook and appeal, can then become more genuinely schools for the people of a socialist society.

After the basic school (from seven to fifteen or sixteen) in place of a universal two-year course in school (including productive work) it is proposed to introduce a three- or four-year period at work (including vocational training and the completion of general education). Performance both at school and at work will count towards entrance to higher colleges, at an age when choice of vocation can be made on the basis of experience as well as scholastic achievement. There will also be wider opportunities for following higher courses by other means, the ultimate aim being a full higher education for all who desire it.

There is nothing final about the proposals advanced. Various suggestions and comments are informally set out for discussion at every level and final decision according to democratic practice. Inevitably discussion will be intensive and widespread.

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Canadian Dilemma

Leslie Morris

THE U.S. Department of Commerce announced in September that 40 per cent of all U.S. overseas investments in manufacturing is in Canada. While in 1957, U.S. investments in the whole of Latin America reached a total of $11,000 million (about $90 per capita of the Latin American population) U.S. investments in Canada are now about $13,000 million (almost $800 per capita of the 17 million Canadian population).

As of the middle of 1958, according to the same source, U.S. investments abroad totalled $40,550 million, of which one-third are in Canada.

Investment by U.S. imperialism of $800 per capita of the Canadian population, if an average annual earning on this money can be said to be 10 per cent, would mean that every Canadian man, woman and child is coughing up about $80 per head annually to U.S. capitalists, in addition to the larger amount that goes to the Canadian capitalists. That this is not an exaggeration is seen from the Commerce Department's estimate that on a 1957 world investment by the U.S. of $38.8 billion, earnings were $3.7 billion, nearly 10 per cent.

Of course this capsule illustration cannot convey the whole picture. United States investors own outright vast portions of Canada's natural wealth. Timber, metals, and other natural resources often are not "leased" but owned by U.S. corporations. There is nothing in Canadian law to prevent such foreign ownership, as there is, for example, in Mexican law. The alienation of these resources is a prime source of public irritation in Canada.

At the turn of the century the U.S.-controlled International Nickel Company got possession of rich nickel deposits in the Sudbury Basin. (John Foster Dulles' firm is closely allied to Inco, and John himself was a director.) Producing more than 80 per cent of the capitalist world's nickel output, the Frood mine at Sudbury has stuffed Inco's pockets with $1,200 million in profit! Now that nickel is over-produced the miners are thrown out of work and on short time. In all this half-century Inco has refused to pay its fair share of municipal improvements in the Sudbury area.

That is a typical illustration of the economic relationships between Canada and the U.S.A.

Apologists for this state of affairs ascribe Canada's economic dependence upon the U.S.A. to "geographical juxtaposition". Of course, this would deny the whole process of the formation of nations. The fact is that Canada's historical development—first as a French, then a British colony, and later as a capitalist country with a native ruling bourgeoisie, and facing a socialist revolution of the classical type, with no bourgeois-democratic agrarian revolution on the historical agenda, reached a point in 1919-1922 when it was caught up in an imperialist struggle between Britain and the U.S.

British and U.S. Capital

Whereas the economic development of the country up to 1919 was facilitated by the import of British capital, in the succeeding three years to 1922 the trend changed abruptly. For the first time, in 1922, British capital investment in Canada was exceeded by American—a reflection of the changed relative positions of these two imperialist powers after the First World War. A simple table will show what happened then, and since:

British and U.S. Investments in Canada
per cent of all foreign investments

	British	U.S.A.
1900	85.4	13.6
1919	57.1	39.2
1922	47.3	49.8
1954	16.9	76.9

This dependence on the U.S. for capital investments is a widely recognised feature of Canadian capitalism. The Canadian *Journal of Economics and Political Science* (Nov. 1956) wrote:

> "No other nation as highly industrialised as Canada has such a large portion of industry controlled by non-resident concerns."

What is the U.S. imperialist attitude to Canada? It is a brazen one, indeed. A few years ago the U.S. Government received the Paley Report, *Resources for Freedom,* a study of the world's raw materials in the light of U.S. needs. It said that of twenty-two strategic materials required by the U.S. economy, ten were to be found in Canada. The report declared that the rich Canadian iron ore deposits at Ungava and Steep Rock must go to U.S. steel mills (as they now do) and that the native capital of countries like Canada should be diverted to "power, transporta-

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tion and other basic services, and investment for increasing productivity in agriculture—fields in which outside private capital takes little or no interest". (Page 61, Vol. 1, Paley Report.)

The dominant Canadian monopolists and their Governments, Liberal and Tory, have agreed with and executed such a policy, especially since the cold war began and the Liberal St. Laurent Government made it the keystone of its work. What has been the result?

Canada's dependence upon the U.S. for manufactured goods, and its reliance on the U.S. as a market for its natural products, have both steadily increased. Since 1946, according to a study made by the provincial government of Ontario (the most industrialised province—producing more than half of Canada's industrial products) the amount of fully manufactured goods exported from Canada has declined 15 per cent when related to total exports, while in the same period the import of manufactured goods rose 11 per cent when related to total imports. This gives the trend.

One of the consequences of this U.S. drive for control of Canadian raw materials, with its corollary, the export to Canada of finished U.S. products, especially key industrial parts and machine-tools, is to throw Canadian industry out of balance. The purpose of U.S. investment has changed from the former practice of developing branch industrial plants in Canada to get "under the wire" of the British imperial preferential tariff system, to outright control of whole sectors of Canadian industry and raw materials.

This means that industrial jobs are exported from Canada to the U.S. The Canadian economy is caught in the pincers of the shipment to U.S. plants of low-priced raw materials and the importation from the U.S. of monopoly-priced finished goods.

In Canada the growth of the production of the means of production is retarded. While basic steel production has increased since the end of the war massive iron ore deposits are being seized by U.S. corporations. The aim of Cyrus Eaton and other entrepreneurs is to obtain by 1975 40 million tons of ore a year from the Quebec-Labrador fields.

Economic dependence and subservience of this kind cannot but penetrate all aspects of present-day Canadian life, particularly because the overlord is warlike U.S. imperialism. The Canadian monopoly-capitalists are hand in glove with their U.S. counterparts and have formed a very junior partnership with U.S. imperialism. This partnership enabled Canadian finance-capitalists to share in the U.S. exploitation of Latin America, the preserve of U.S. imperialism. Rich and profitable investments are held by Canadian financial houses in Cuba and Brazil.

Canada's Foreign Policy

The reflection in the field of foreign policy of this class alliance between U.S. and Canadian capitalists is well known. The national interest of the country is surrendered. Canada has become a launching pad for the U.S. military. Thousands of U.S. troops are stationed on Canadian territory with such complete extra-territorial rights that recently a Tory cabinet minister complained that he could not visit the Distant Early Warning radar installations which stretch across the Canadian Arctic (a sector of the North American Air Command) without getting permission from the Pentagon. Indeed, the Canadian press is filled with complaints that Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic, where enormous natural resources have been air-surveyed, is now in doubt. The "effective occupation" theory which the Yankees espouse provided them with a handy "claim" and they are already acting as if the matter were settled. Meanwhile, the Canadian Government diddles its fingers and does nothing. It hasn't got even a part of the grit of its N.A.T.O. partner, Iceland.

The Canadian Army and Air Force are literally sectors of the U.S. Armed Forces. They are "integrated" so closely that recently a Canadian jet fighter whose pilot model had cost the Canadian taxpayers $400 million, was scrapped in favour of the Bomarc guided missile—a U.S. Army product. The Diefenbaker cabinet, without consulting Parliament, in the few months since the March 1958 general election, despite all its election campaign demagogy about "standing up to the U.S.A.", has transformed the whole Canadian defence system into an adjunct of the U.S. nuclear war machine. Atom-bomb-loaded U.S. planes fly regularly over Canadian settlements. Nuclear weapons, of course, are without warheads. Uncle Sam keeps them under lock and key.

The diplomatic recognition of the People's Republic of China is widely demanded in Canada, particularly now when the developing crisis (the forecast is for a million unemployed this winter) brings Canada-China trade to the fore. The former Liberal Prime Minister, St. Laurent, and his Nobel Peace Prize-winner lieutenant, Lester Pearson, the architects of the N.A.T.O. policy for Canada, both admitted when they were in office that Canada should recognise China but that John Foster Dulles stood in the way. Canada must not offend its shield and buckler against "Communist aggression", the U.S.A. National sovereignty is a small price to pay for American "protection" against the Soviet Union. And if social services remain

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far behind even Western Europe's, the patriotic duty of Canadians is to put up with it. So goes the official propaganda—Liberal and Tory alike.

The new Tory Government follows a policy basically the same as the Liberals did. In the Quemoy crisis an unprecedented press campaign attacked the Government's pussyfooting attitude to the Eisenhower-Dulles line. It was led by the chief Tory organ, the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, which declared that this was the opportune moment to recognise China and demand that she be seated in her rightful place in the United Nations. After some mumbling remarks in the General Assembly the Canadian Foreign Minister knuckled down to Dulles.

Up to now, and with increasing frequency, conflicts between wordy opposition to U.S. policy and the subservient deed are characteristic of Canadian foreign policy. But they are getting sharper. An influential sector of the bourgeoisie—not the dominant groups of monopoly capitalists—is not only restive under U.S. domination, but fearful of economic crisis and with little faith in the U.S. economy (which deals heavy blows to sections of the trading capitalists) and is now denouncing the subservience of Canada and espousing a foreign policy possessing strong overtones of recognition of the necessity for peaceful co-existence.

This developing public mood was to be seen in the two recent federal elections of June 1957 and March 1958, when the Conservative Party won the Government, the second time gaining an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons. The Liberal Party had held office steadily from 1935 to 1957; it had executed the turn to U.S. policy and away from Britain. It was the executor of the "integration with the U.S." concept in domestic and foreign affairs. The Conservative Party, sensing rising popular dissatisfaction with this policy, seized upon it and posed as the champion of Canadian national interests. Their electoral victory was the result.

Labour's Position

Labour, because it has not yet formed a mass parliamentary party, was not able to stand at the head of this dissatisfaction. The social-democratic party, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, ignored the main issue and lost two-thirds of its parliamentary seats (seventeen out of twenty-five). The Communists—the Labor-Progressive Party—who had raised the issue of Canadian independence from U.S. domination since the early 1950's, are not yet able to channel this discontent in its direction. The prime cause of the set-backs which the labour forces received in both elections was the absence of united independent labour political actions. The shameless policy of the C.C.F. M.P.s of voting for the crippling N.A.T.O. budgets and support for the St. Laurent-Pearson foreign policy, held back and confused many progressive people. This dangerous opportunism is continuing. In the recent session of the Tory-dominated parliament the C.C.F. M.P.s again supported the arms budget and the pro-Dulles line of the Diefenbaker Government.

The Tory Government has conducted some stage-play about Canadian trade. It advocated a switch away from the U.S. to Britain of 15 per cent of Canadian foreign trade in order to reduce Canada's lop-sided dependence on the U.S. for its imports and exports. When the British went a step farther and proposed a return to the obsolete Commonwealth preferential system and a virtual "free trade" between Canada and Britain, the Tory Government was taken aback. U.S. interests made it clear that this must not be done except at the price of agonising reappraisals. Eisenhower, in addressing the Canadian Parliament last summer, spoke like a U.S. gauleiter and warned the Canadian Government and the bourgeoisie against any such nonsense. This was taken to heart by the Diefenbaker Government. At the Commonwealth Economic Conference in September in Montreal the Canadians were, once again, the voices of Wall Street interests. The truculence of the election hustings has given place to the reality—the very junior partnership of Canadian state-monopoly capitalism with their U.S. master, and the rank betrayal by them of the national interest.

The pattern of the political conflicts in the modern imperialist stage of Canadian development is the struggle for national independence. It is not a "classical" colonial struggle of an oppressed and underdeveloped country against the metropolis. The "colour" colonialist characteristic is missing. Canada is an "extension of the metropolis", as the Communist International resolutions correctly said years ago. It faces a proletarian revolution; the character of the revolution is socialist, and not bourgeois-democratic; the motive force of the revolution is the working class. Thus, we have a national independence struggle in a highly-developed capitalist country (60 per cent urban) and this gives rise to special tactical problems—with their attendant twin dangers of under-estimating the role of the working class and exaggerating the role of the "national" capitalists who criticise and resist U.S. domination; of resisting the possibilities of a broad national democratic front for independence which would extend the influence of the working class and the Communists.

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It is more than likely that the struggle for the socialist path and the struggle for national independence from U.S. domination, will merge. This offers a series of tactical possibilities which can only assist socialist strategy. For example, the war danger, for Canada, is indissolubly linked up with the fight against U.S. domination, in a very intimate sense.

Commitment to War

The subordination of Canada to U.S. imperialism included an automatic commitment to war for U.S. interests, not only via N.A.T.O., but through a whole series of common "defence" arrangements between the two countries which are outside of N.A.T.O.—the North American Air Command, for example. The 3,000-mile boundary between the U.S. and Canada is, for Canadians, a border upon the very centre of world reaction and war instigation. The consequences of this, for the Canadian people, could be catastrophic, as the Soviet Government, in very explicit letters, has pointed out to the Canadian Government.

The movement for Canadian independence, the safeguarding of Canadian national sovereignty, the release of Canada from the strangle-hold of U.S. domination, the entrance of Canada into the world markets and her liberation from one-sided dependence on the U.S.A., freedom from the consequences of the Dulles line in international affairs, and the encouragement by the state and all popular organisations of a democratic Canadian national culture to resist the pervading influences of U.S. capitalist culture—all of this, as the Labor-Progressive Party says, will merge with the movements towards the socialist solution.

Canadian independence is not a matter that has been "conjured up" by Communists. Relationships with the U.S.A. have been a constant factor in Canadian history. They were in the very centre of the struggle to establish Canada at the time of Confederation in 1867.

While Friedrich Engels, on his visit to the U.S. and Canada in the 1880's, could understandably express the opinion that Canada inevitably would become part of the U.S.A., history has decided otherwise. Canada has been established as a bi-national state of French Canada and English-speaking Canada, and its capitalist development has excluded "union with" or "annexation by" the U.S.A.—in the first place because of the stubborn national opposition of the Canadian people to such a dolorous fate.

Contribution to the discussion on

"Whither Trade Unionism?"

Bill Warman

DURING the years since the end of the war, many wrong ideas have developed in the Trade Union movement as a result of illusions created by the period of full employment. These reformist ideas have led to the opinion, that all the Trade Union movement has to do is to understand how the capitalist system works, and then to utilise the system for getting the best possible deal for the workers, in circumstances when industry is prosperous. We have seen, therefore, a spate of new proposals in the educational curricula of various Unions and that of such organisations as the N.C.L.C., all designed to create representatives in the factories who are not interested in fighting the employers as a class, but whose aim is to utilise the legal forms and their understanding of the mechanism of capitalism, to secure certain advances for the workers. Such educational courses as "Time and Motion Study", "Shares and Banking", Management in Industry", are very common in the curricula of various educational courses for trade unionists and it is perfectly obvious that the whole idea arises from the illusion that capitalism today is different from what it was between the two wars, that the question of full employment has been solved and—logically therefore—that the system is all right and there is no need to change it, only a need to understand its working so that benefit for the workers can be derived from it.

To my mind, this indicates the departure of the Trade Union movement of today from the socialist principles of the pioneers of the movement, principles that were responsible for the basis of our organisation, and we have to combat these false ideas wherever we come in contact with them. How are we going to do this?

In the first place, these illusions are not accepted by the majority of the workers in industry. On the contrary, one thing that is prevalent is a feeling of insecurity, of doubts as to whether jobs are going to last. Along with this, there is a growing cynicism to the Trade Union movement and to many of its

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leaders, a lack of faith and confidence which is widespread. It is our job on the one hand to use our Marxist understanding of the economic factors and the class struggle which govern the day-to-day life of the average worker in industry, to explain to the workers on the basis of their daily struggle how wrong these reformist ideas are, and on the other hand to give them the alternative, to encourage ideas of socialism and give them faith in their own power to achieve this aim. This, of course, is not an easy task. It is something for which militants have struggled in the Trade Union movement for many many years.

I believe that we have today greater opportunities to drive these lessons home than we have had before. The growing unemployment in the U.S.A. plus the increase of unemployment and short-time working in Britain, are the symptoms of the economic system of capitalism. In contrast to this, the socialist countries have no fear of unemployment, put no brakes on production and are forging ahead, completely independent of the stresses and strains with which the Western world is riddled. This is one of the lessons which we must drive home.

Bound up closely with this is the question of unity and in particular Trade Union unity. In recent years, there has been a development of disunity between various sections of the Trade Union movement. In my daily experience, I cannot fail to notice time after time the aggressive tones that are adopted by certain leading Trade Unionists in arguments with members of another Union in contrast to the language they use in negotiations with the employers. It is quite common for Trade Union officials to make great speeches at Trade Union branch meetings, antagonistic to members of other unions, but never mentioning the necessity of the workers' struggle against the employing classes. All militant trade unionists have to fight against this tendency. Differences, of course, arise amongst us, demarcation issues appear from time to time, but a class conscious approach can easily find a solution to these problems, and once they are settled, the greater unity between the sections involved in the discussion is all the more important in the struggle with the employers. Our main attack, however, has to be reserved for the employers and the employing classes. We have to draw the attention of the workers at all times in that direction, and unity with its tremendous advantages to the movement must continually be fought for.

Some recent developments in the Trade Union movement need every encouragement from the official section which, at the moment, they do not get. As the result of the development of combines in industrial life, the shop stewards have automatically taken steps to safeguard the workers' interest employed in this section of industry. For example, in the motor industry, e.g. the B.M.C., Fords and Standard Motor Co., what have come to be known as "Combine Shop Stewards Organisations" have been developed, and are meeting regularly. This development has never really received the official recognition of the Trade Union movement and, in fact, in many areas attempts are being made by certain officials, to sabotage and break up these committees. We must secure within the movement the official recognition of these committees, and the official backing of the Trade Union movement as a whole.

It has always been my experience on the shop floor, that the average worker understands the need for unity only too well, when the problem is put to him. Very often, workers support actions taken by their shop stewards against the employers in the interest of working class unity, only to find themselves frustrated by the reactions of the official Trade Union movement. Industrial unionism is often talked about. The Combine Shop Stewards Committees are the nearest approach to this idea, and the more we strengthen these committees, the more will the understanding of the need for one union for one industry take root.

The Question of Youth

One particular aspect of the Trade Union movement, however, is being neglected more than any other. This is the question of youth and their recruitment and training.

This issue becomes of increasing importance as the result of the "bulge" which has the effect that many young people are having to be satisfied with employment in "blind alley" jobs. Bringing young people into the movement is not a task in which fatherly assistance is all that is required. It is a problem that *must* be solved, and if we want the movement to carry on with the tradition of struggle we *must* have young militants to carry out this struggle. All our experiences of strikes and demonstrations since the end of the Second World War have proved that young people, when faced with an important issue, are more than prepared to play their part alongside the adult movement. The majority of British youths are healthy and good principled, interested in improving their lives and that of their fellow men. The hooligans of Notting Hill and of Nottingham are not representative of the whole of the British youth, but of a small minority only, but unless we in the Trade Union movement can do something to inspire these young workers and win them to play their part in the movement, they will drift, and become frustrated in the process. We should be prepared to fight the employers for decent working conditions for young men and women, to see that they are not the subject of special exploitation and cheap labour. We must

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ensure that they get adequate opportunity for training and further education. We must be prepared at shop level to encourage young people to take part in the Trade Union organisation.

In my shop, for example, it is the rule to co-opt at least one apprentice on to the shop committee every quarter. Furthermore, at Trade Union branch meetings, they should be encouraged to say their piece. Very often, the greater experience of the older members tends to overshadow them and the "heavy father" attitude of "I know what is best for you, my lad" should be banished from Trade Union branches. Stories of "how much better off they are today than when I was a boy," are not the kind of things that are going to win the youth of today. They have been born into this world as it is, and the majority of them are interested in seeing it made into something better. We cannot ignore the experiences of the past as lessons for the future, but it is the future that the young people are interested in and it is the future that the movement as a whole should be concerned with, if we hope to secure that kind of advance that is necessary in this day and age. We should therefore give every possible encouragement to the setting up of committees of youths. The Trade Union movement should be made to understand the problems of youths, and the youths themselves are the people that we must listen to if we want to understand any of their problems. A youth movement in the Trade Union movement is long overdue, and I believe that a youth section on the T.U.C. would be worth considering. Such a section would not have the barriers, divisions, old ideas and phobias that are still in the minds of many of our older trade unionists.

Harry Pollitt, in opening the discussion on the Trade Union movement, made a call for the return of the pioneer spirit of the olden days. This, I believe, is absolutely necessary, but in doing so we have to combat certain habits and customs which have grown up inside the movement. Nobody should be asked, if at all possible, to suffer economic hardship as the result of his activities, although many do. There is, however, a tendancy growing in the Trade Union movement today whereby many of its leaders at all levels are reluctant to do a single job, unless they are paid for doing it. A great deal of time is spent at union conferences in discussing the question of payment for both major and minor offices in the Trade Union movement and there is a danger that the plums of office rather than the principles of the class struggle can become the main factor. Along with this, we have to combat excessive personal ambition which can develop in the movement when the question of office comes under consideration. In this aspect, even our people are at times affected. Ambition is not a bad thing in itself, but for us Communists, ambition must be related to the interests of our class. Unfortunately, this is not always the case and outside our Party it is very often not so. Some quite sharp personal differences can develop between individual trade unionists of the Left, if they both happen to be interested in some petty position in the movement. Unfortunately, this trend manifests itself in many parts of the country. We Communists have a particular responsibility in ending this state of affairs. We are not in the movement for any personal achievements. Our, and other militants' participation in the Trade Union movement is entirely in the interest of our class. By stamping out this personal ambition, we can secure the election of an increasing number of militants to the leadership in the movement. This, I believe, is one of the most important questions that we have to face.

The Communist Party needs allies and there are many people in the Trade Union movement with whom we are able to work. The number of our allies is very often reduced as a result of stupid bickering between one and the other. We can play the necessary unifying role and thus ensure that the main objective is kept in sight.

The December number of *Marxism Today* will contain an important article on the People's Communes in China by Michael Shapiro.

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